STARBLAZER ADVENTURES

THE ROCK AND ROLL SPACE OPERA ADVENTURE GAME

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Stuart Newman would like to thank Chris Birch for bringing me in on this—something we've talked about for years and finally done. Special thanks to my 3 year old son Luke, and wife Hel, for the time absorbed on ***Starblazer Adventures***.

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STEVE MARTIN AND THE LAST WARRIOR OF RHEA BLASTED OUT INTO SPACE TO FIGHT FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE FAR OUT ON THE GALACTIC RIM.

Foreword

A Foreword From Ian Livingstone

Creative ideas deserve outlets. Were it not for the increasingly diverse and innovative independent publishers springing up across the world we would see only the big headline games and little else. In the early days of gaming in the 1970s Steve Jackson and I created Games Workshop to be an outlet for the many games companies, before we realised the only way to survive in such a small market at that time was to develop our own games and focus exclusively on those. And building on the success of our own titles we went on to write our Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks which started slowly but went on to become became international bestsellers. Since then there have been an increasingly smaller number of companies surviving on the gaming market, focussed around just a few best selling brands. However diversity is good and with the ever diminishing circle of big name games and the increasingly accessible means to publish and distribute your own books in a professional manner it was only a matter of time before people started to turn their own ideas into reality.

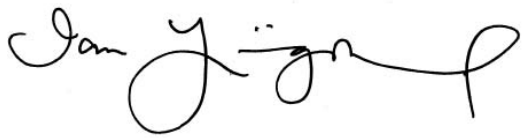
The last few years have seen a rapid rise in self-publishing by a small but fast growing community of talented people that are passionate about their games. As the technology and services to print and publish books in small quantities or 'on demand' develops so too this attendant publishing community snatches any new opportunity to release its ideas to the world. It was this new passion-driven aspect of the industry that saw Fred Hicks and Rob Donoghue create the FATE rules, an award winning role playing game system that left the maths behind and focused on story telling and fun.

With the growth in the gaming community a number of companies have sprung up to bring together the new creators, artists and writers to tap in to both the existing gaming audience and new players. Cubicle 7 Entertainment is one such business which believed in Chris Birch's ideas, and together they realised the opportunity to turn a unique British comic licence into a highly playable role playing game.

Starblazer was one of the milestones of the British comic scene in the 70's and 80's. It inspired many of the artists who worked for Games Workshop and most artists I work with at Eidos today will point to Starblazer as one of their early introductions to science-fiction art.

This book, Starblazer Adventures, represents the fresh ideas of a group of people who decided to spend the long hours creating something new – from Fred & Rob who wrote the FATE rules to Chris, Stuart and their team who have weaved the tale of Starblazer's heroes around the FATE foundations. If more creative partnerships like this continue to emerge we'll see a renaissance in the gaming industry that promises to unite new blood and industry expertise and bring a whole new generation to the table, and that, in my opinion can only be great thing.

So here's to some rock and roll adventures in the fantastic worlds of ***Starblazer***!



CHAPTER ONE
Introduction

Welcome to Starblazer!

Gigantic fleets prowl the starlanes, mysterious aliens devise inexplicable fates for humankind, devilish scientists operate enormous engines of destruction and swashbuckling princes defend their worlds from ancient empires.

Each of ***Starblazer***'s 281 comic books explored a whole story set within the vast galactic empires of the far future. ***Starblazer Adventures*** is designed to help you create a story telling game set within any of the space opera storylines described by the comics. From low-tech space exploration to galaxy-busting wars to space fantasy epics at the end of time. There is plenty for everyone.

What is Starblazer?

Published by British publisher D.C.Thomson, ***Starblazer*** was the home to some of the best British science fiction space opera of the 1970's and 80's. Featuring stunning art and classic space opera stories, comic creators such as Grant Morrison and John Smith, artists Enrique Alcatena, Mike McMahon, Cam Kennedy, John Ridgeway, Alan Rogers, Jaime Oritz, Ian Kennedy, Colin MacNeil and Casanovas Junior helped bring the fantastic **"spacefiction adventure in pictures"** to life.

Each issue featured a self-contained story, with characters and organisations, phrases and technology re-appearing in many adventures. Several of the regularly re-appearing characters such as Fi-Sci (the Fighting Scientists of Galac Squad), The Star Patrol, The Suicide Squad, The Planet Tamer, Cinnibar the barbarian warrior of Babalon and galactic cop Frank Carter are detailed in the Starblazer Legends chapter.

DC Thomson is a major British publisher, producing over 200 million newspapers and magazines each year. Established in 1905 and famous for their ***Beano*** and ***Dandy*** comic books they also still publish the sister comic to ***Starblazer***, the legendary ***Commando***.

What is Fate?

Fate is the award-winning role-playing system driving ***Spirit of the Century*** and the ***Dresden Files RPG***. Fate can be used to build the best kinds of role-playing experiences – full of laughter, story-telling and memorable moments. You can find out more about the designers of the Fate system, Evil Hat Productions, and join the community of Fate fans at their website, *www.evilhat.com.*

What is Space Opera?

Space Opera is science fiction without all the detail that bogs you down. Everything from ***Star Wars™*** to old school ***Star Trek™*** is space opera. The science generally makes sense but nothing is explained or justified in great detail and technology is more a tool for the characters to do wild and crazy things. Ships are gigantic, heroes stand alone, aliens are everywhere, bad guys are really bad and are often tied in some way to the heroes, plots are usually to destroy whole civilisations and everything is that much more epic. Space opera doesn't have to be dodgy characters in bad fitting stretchy suits jumping around though, if you want to play gritty space exploration or go to war with the marines, it's up to you.

All the tools are here in this book to play all kinds of space opera adventures. And if you check out the comics you'll find literally, hundreds of stories inspired by all the best sci-fi and fantasy adventures.

Batteries Not Included

Okay, there's some stuff that you can't include in a book that you will need to play this game:

- Two six sided dice – ideally for each player and the Story Teller.
- A copy of the character sheet on page 606 for each player or blank paper to write down information instead.
- Pens or pencils.
- A bunch of friends. For running a game, somewhere between two and eight is ideal.

You'll find *useful*:

- A set of poker chips or glass beads (to use as Fate points; see page 201).
- A pad of paper to pass notes, draw maps and pictures as you're playing.
- Snacks, drinks, dinner if anyone's feeling adventurous, a pile of take-away menus if not!

What Is A Roleplaying Game Or Adventure Game? How Should I Play Starblazer?

You've probably heard these terms a few times before and imagined all kinds of things! Roleplaying has been used for years in business school to allow students to experiment with potential business situations – such as "hey you're the manager and you've got to let 10% of the workforce go, and you're the head of the union and want a 10% payrise, work it out between the two of you."

The most famous roleplaying game, of course is probably ***Dungeons & Dragons™***, made famous in the movies, video games and a cartoon. It's the game that lets you play warriors, thieves, clerics and wizards exploring a rich fantasy world.

Now roleplaying technically isn't the right word, you see it really means playing a role – or acting the part. I run a drama group and this is what we do there, under the name of 'improvisation'. Roleplaying games or RPG's don't involve any acting at all unless you enjoy putting on unusual voices and acting out your part – of course you're allowed to do that and are often rewarded for it. We feel it's more accurate to call our game an 'Adventure Game' – a mutual story telling experience where you play a character in a story. You play the 'role' in as much as you get your character to do things that you believe they, not YOU, would do. Maybe they're more heroic, more spiritual, more harsh, more intelligent, more afraid? I'm glad to let you know this doesn't involve prancing around in tights saying "But my lady!". To keep it simple, from now on we'll refer to this as an Adventure Game, okay?

So how does it work? The Story Teller (or Games Master as is commonly used) dreams up the plot to a story, the details of the bad guys, the scenes and any places of interest in the story. Meanwhile the players create the characters they will each play in the story, what they are like, what motivates them, what they can do (all using some simple guidelines). The rules in this book are very simple, they're there to provide a framework for what you can and can't do as a player. The simple answer is, of course, that you can do anything you can imagine yourself doing in the same situation. The rules are only there for when you try to do something unusual, or that people only tend to try to do in the movies – such as running through burning buildings, firing guns at fast moving targets, fly powerful Starships down narrow canyons or spin a car in the street to cut down an alley out of sight of your enemy.

What's most important is the story, always, forever and amen. Never forget that. If for one moment someone needs to check a basic rule at the height of the story, don't lose that moment, keep going, make it up. The reason you're all sitting around playing this game is to have fun, not to score, not to win, not to gloat. Worst case, use the handy reference sheet in the back of the book (cut it out, photocopy it or download the version from our website at *www.starblazeradventures.com*) but try not to open the book for something as simple as whether a bonus is +1 or +2.

I want you to have *so* much fun playing ***Starblazer Adventures*** that all your friends wonder why you talk about it with such a gleam in your eye, why you're always laughing about what happened, and eventually want to join in!

That's the rock and roll bit in the title. This is about having a heck of a lot of fun with your friends and it's the kind of experience you just can't get playing a video game (which is totally different - totally cool, but different).

Who Do I Play With?

Okay, so you bought this book and want to get get in on the action? If you don't know anyone who likes playing roleplaying or adventure games then here's some things to try:

Check out *www.rpg.net* – the forum there is incredibly busy and a great place to find people who play all over the world. You should find lists of local clubs or if you ask the question people will normally direct you to the right information.

Join the community at our website, *www.starblazeradventures.com* – a great place to find other people around the world playing ***Starblazer Adventures***, get ideas, tips and find the answers to questions you might have.

Try the local games store that sells roleplaying, board and adventure games. They normally have a noticeboard for clubs in the area and you can always post a note saying you want to run or join a game.

Want to be brave?! I run a drama group and explaining this was an adventure game where we told a story over dinner I managed to get 3 guys and 3 girls to come and play. Everyone brought drinks, I cooked dinner and we have had, and continue to have some of the wildest ***Starblazer Adventures***, with people taking it in turns to cook some great meals. Now what I'm saying is if you explain the idea of this to people in a format they understand – key words: Dinner party and story telling game – then you shouldn't have a problem. That's the thing with social life these days – if it isn't dinner parties it's going out to dinner or hitting the pubs, bars or clubs. Now you'll be amazed that most people (even the ones you think are going out a lot) spend a lot of their time at home bored, watching rubbish TV, watching movies, playing video games, etc. Everyone loves an invite to a dinner party, especially an unusal one, and once you try a game like this, people generally love it. And if you're a good cook? Hey, they're yours!

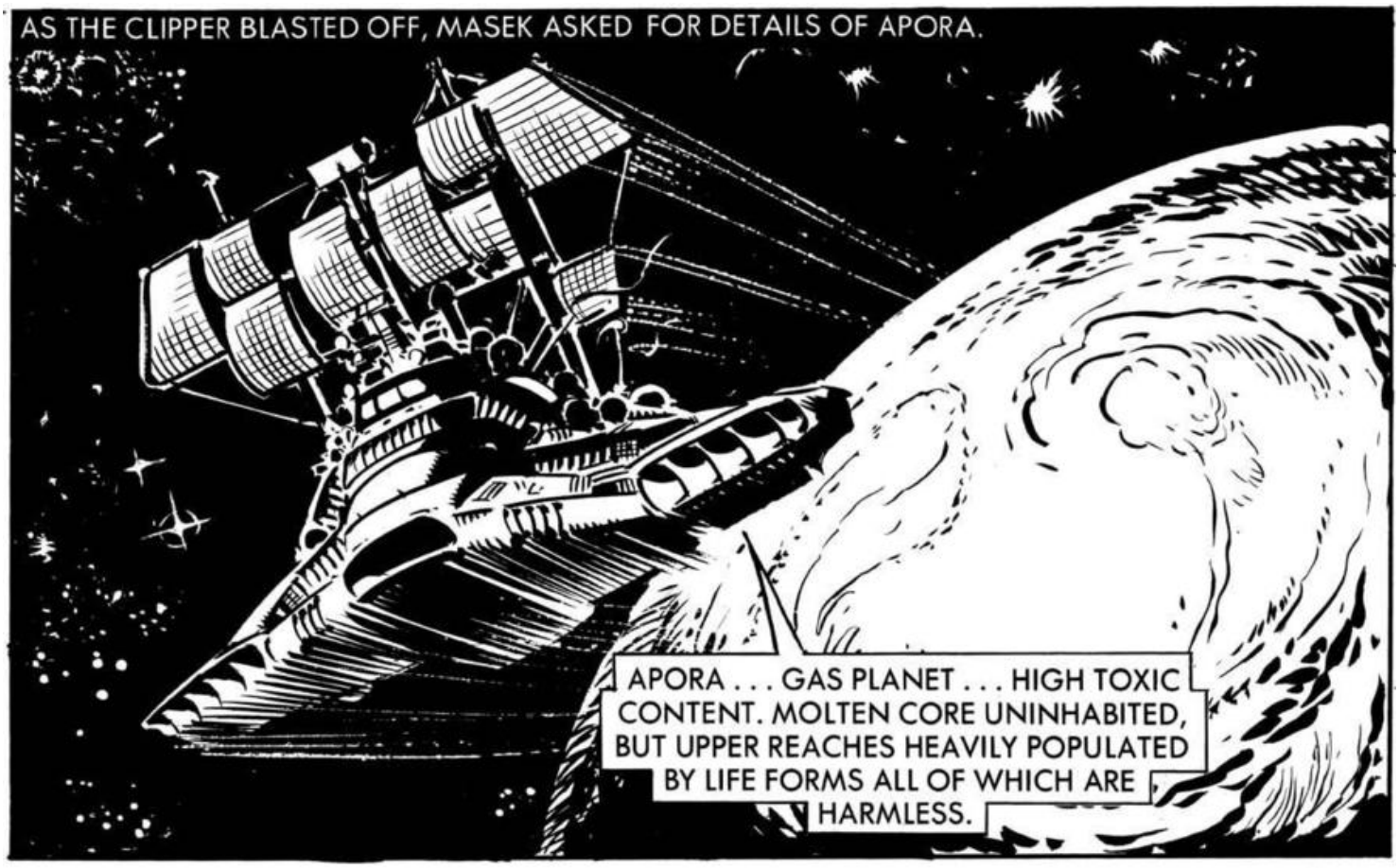
What Do You Mean By "Story Teller"?

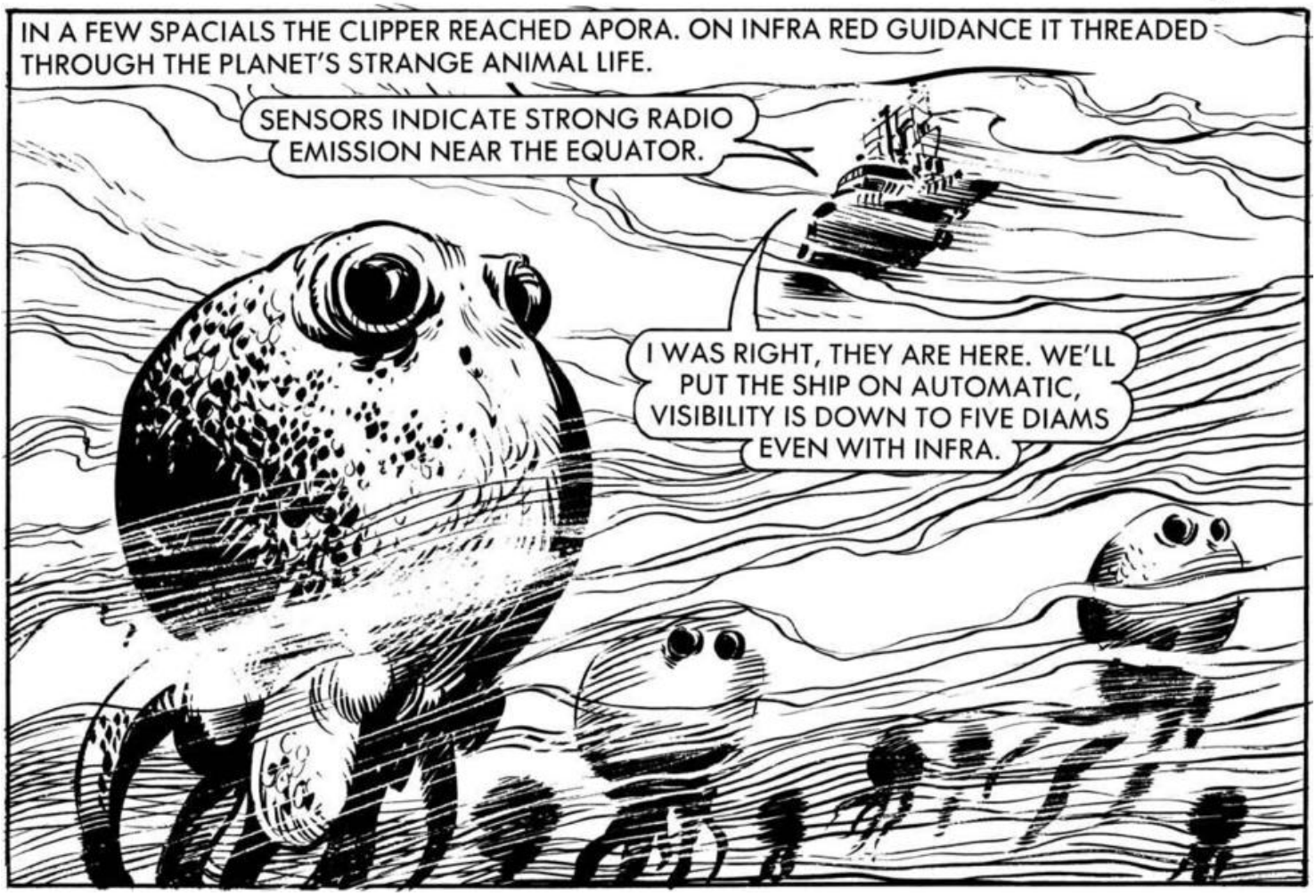
The ***Starblazer Adventures*** game is basically an elaborate way to tell a story with a group of friends. To do that we need a **Story Teller**, also called Games Master, DM or GM in other games. They tell the story (with everyone else's help), devise the plot, background, setting and enemies, play the roles of Extras and enemies when you encounter them and are responsible for making sure the other players have a great time. He or she should definitely know the rules – it helps if the players do but it's not necessary.

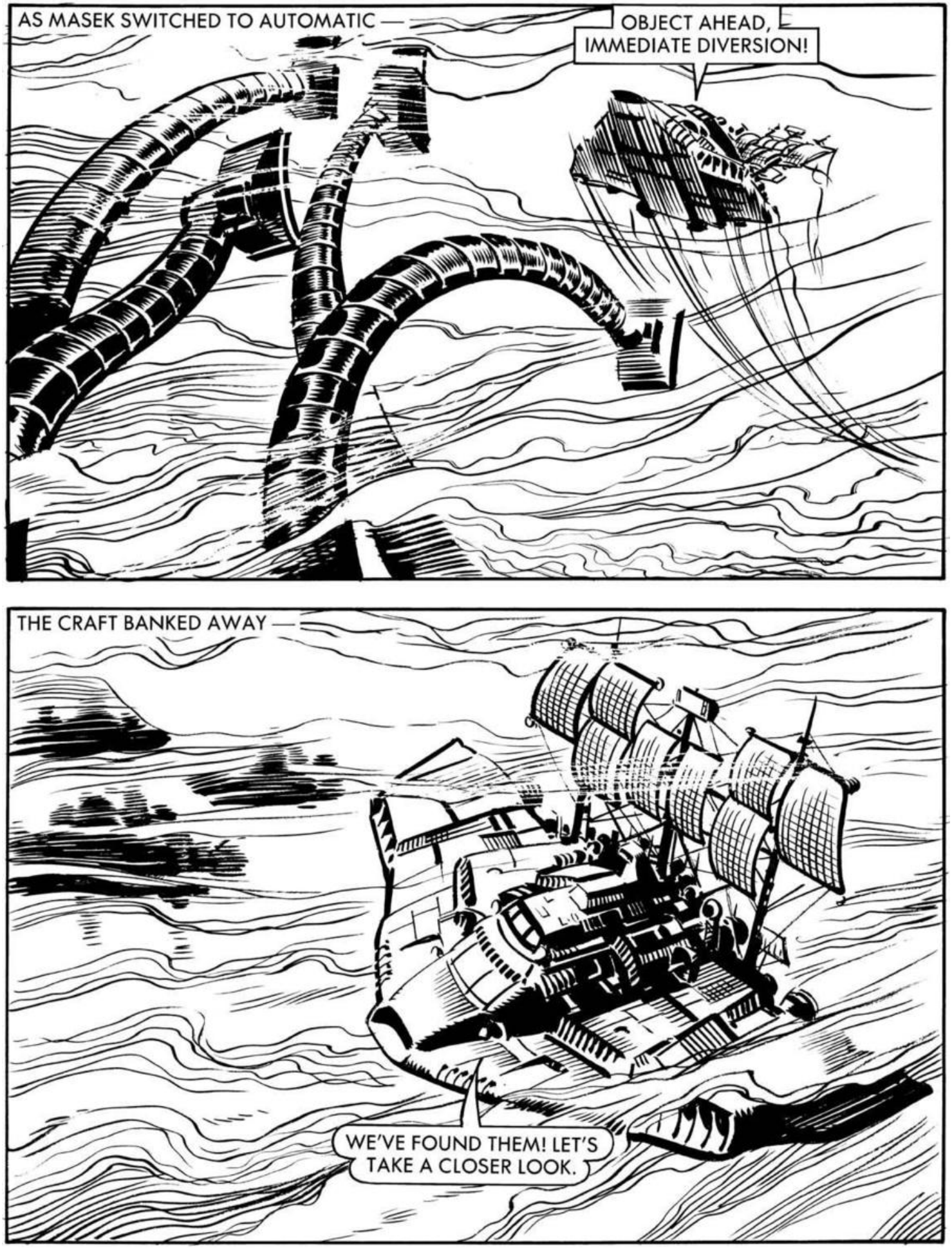
If you're familiar with games likes this, I must say I generally roll my eyes at the various names games designers replace things like 'GM' with just to try and be different but in this case it just felt right. The Fate rules which are at the core of this game, are about telling stories and the Story Teller is not there to adjudicate rules and modifiers but to lead the players in a galactic tale of heroism. You'll see me go on about this a lot. Rules out, story in, okay?

Oh and whilst we're at it. The Fate rules encourage cooperative story telling, and the Story Teller's job is to lead the story but his or her word is law at the end of the day. If they say a player can do something, then they can, if they say they can't, they can't and if they say they can but they've got to roll the dice and add a number, or spend a Fate point, then that's what they've got to do. Saying that, Story Tellers should always be open to creative ways of solving problems that players come up with. Ultimately, the Story Teller has the final say.

— Chris Birch

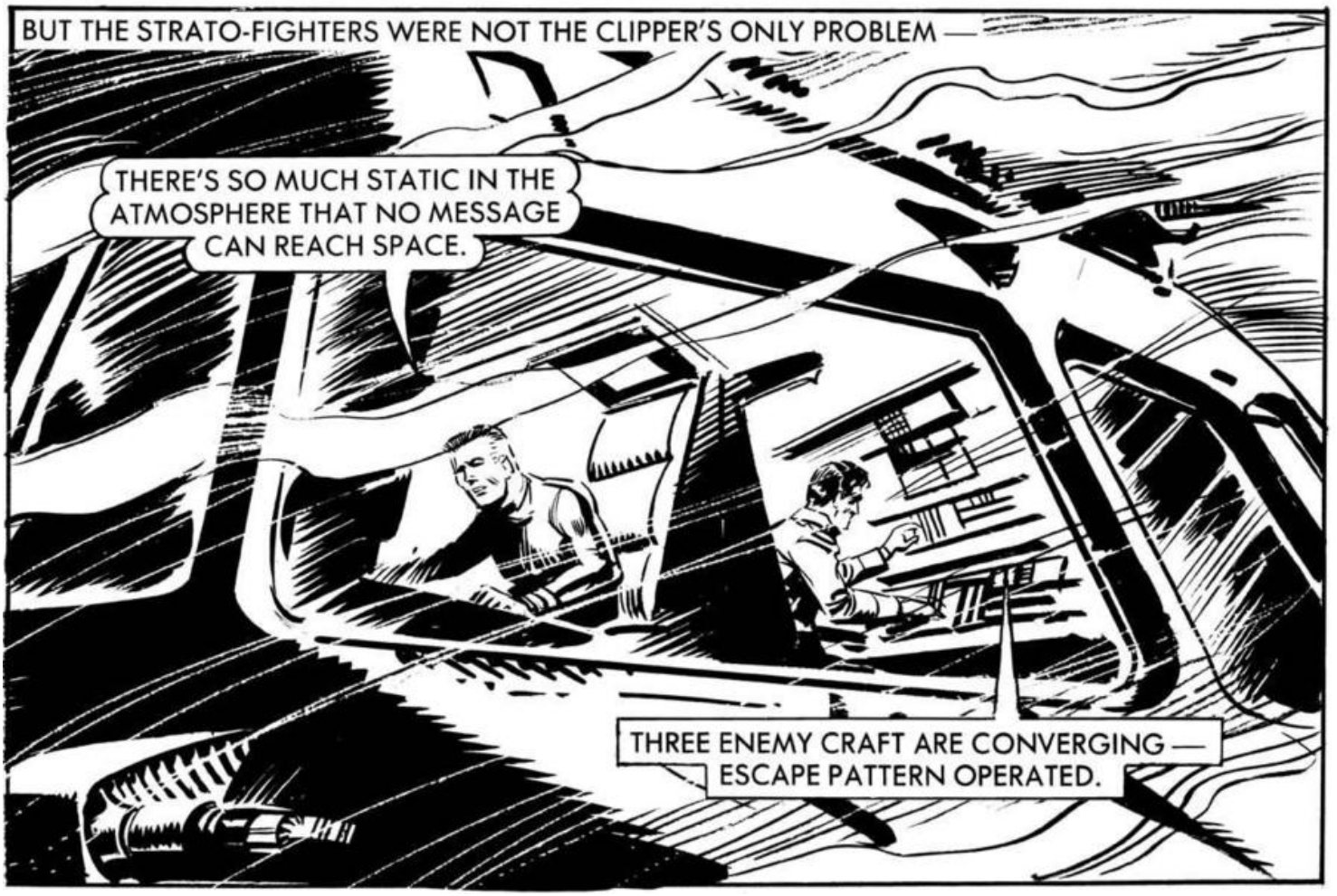

AS THE CLIPPER BLASTED OFF, MASEK ASKED FOR DETAILS OF APORA.
APORA . . . GAS PLANET . . . HIGH TOXIC CONTENT. MOLTEN CORE UNINHABITED, BUT UPPER REACHES HEAVILY POPULATED BY LIFE FORMS ALL OF WHICH ARE HARMLESS.

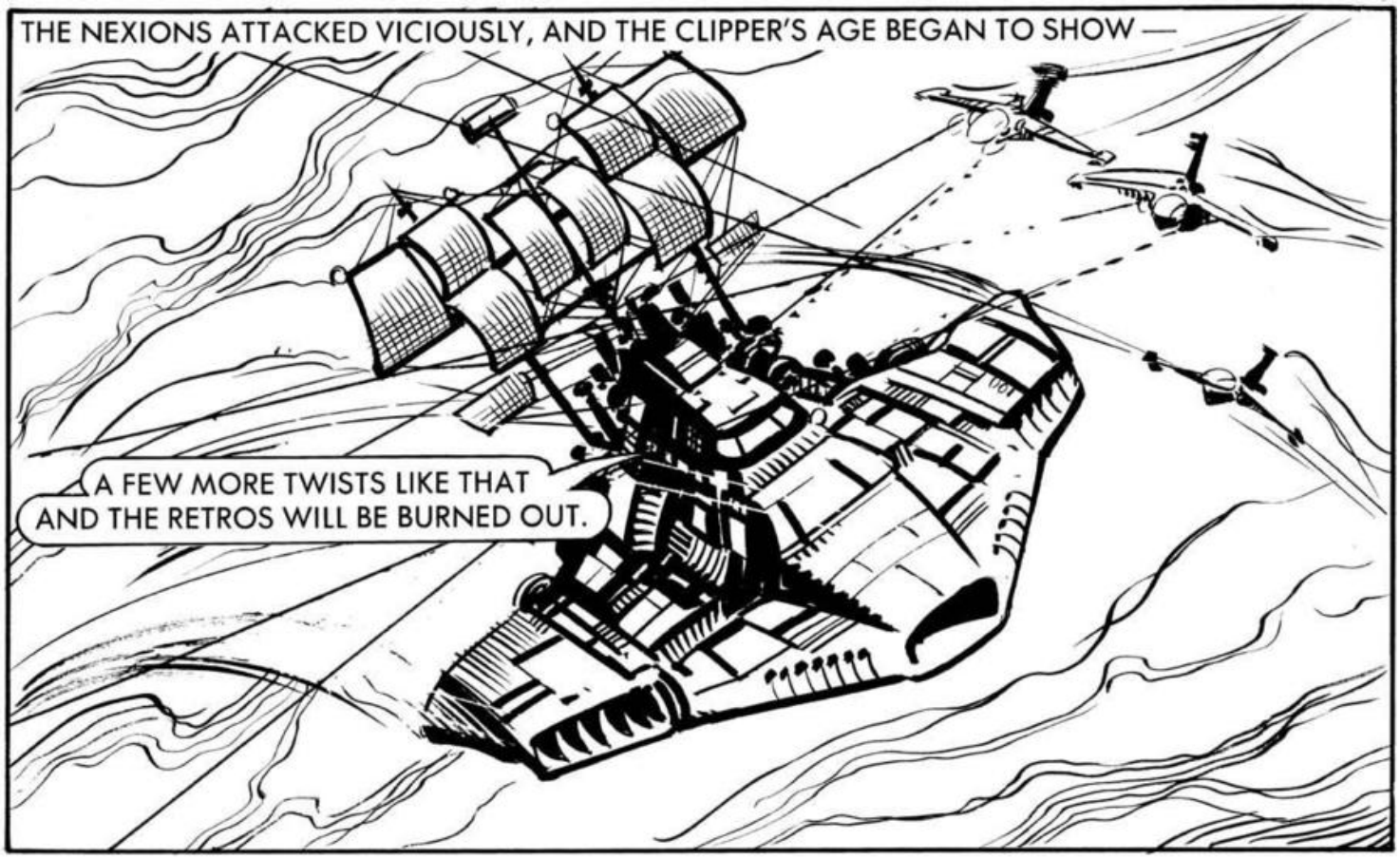

IN A FEW SPACIALS THE CLIPPER REACHED APORA. ON INFRA RED GUIDANCE IT THREADED THROUGH THE PLANET'S STRANGE ANIMAL LIFE.
SENSORS INDICATE STRONG RADIO EMISSION NEAR THE EQUATOR.
I WAS RIGHT, THEY ARE HERE. WE'LL PUT THE SHIP ON AUTOMATIC, VISIBILITY IS DOWN TO FIVE DIAMS EVEN WITH INFRA.

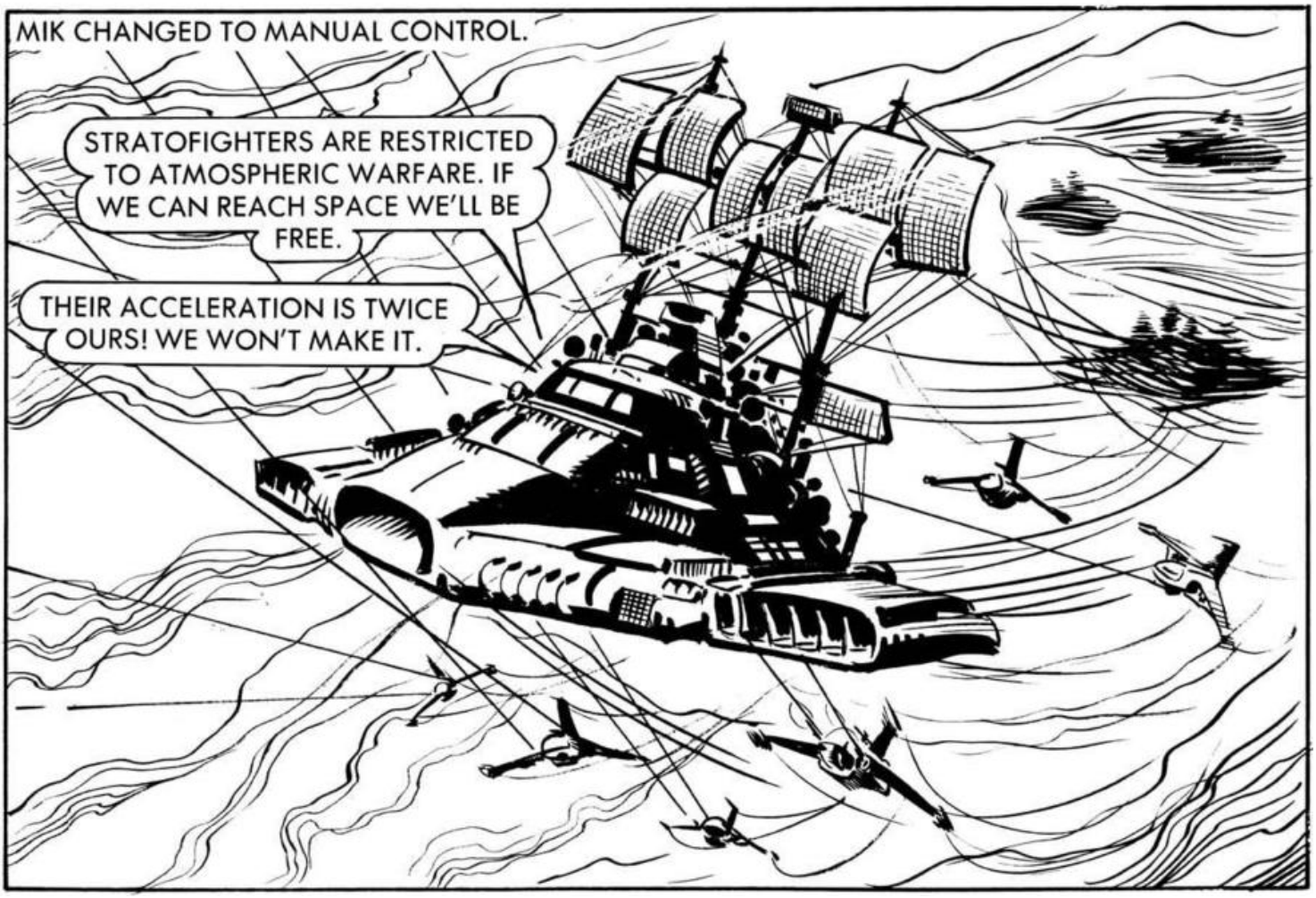

AS MASEK SWITCHED TO AUTOMATIC —
OBJECT AHEAD, IMMEDIATE DIVERSION!
THE CRAFT BANKED AWAY —
WE'VE FOUND THEM! LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK.

NEXIOS MAGNA CITIES! THEY MUST BE HELD UP BY A SOURCE ON THE CORE. WHAT ON EARTH ARE THE NEXIONS UP TO NOW?
THESE ARE THE DECOYS THAT ATTACKED THE CROSSROADS. WE HAVE TO CONTACT THE HOME FLEET.

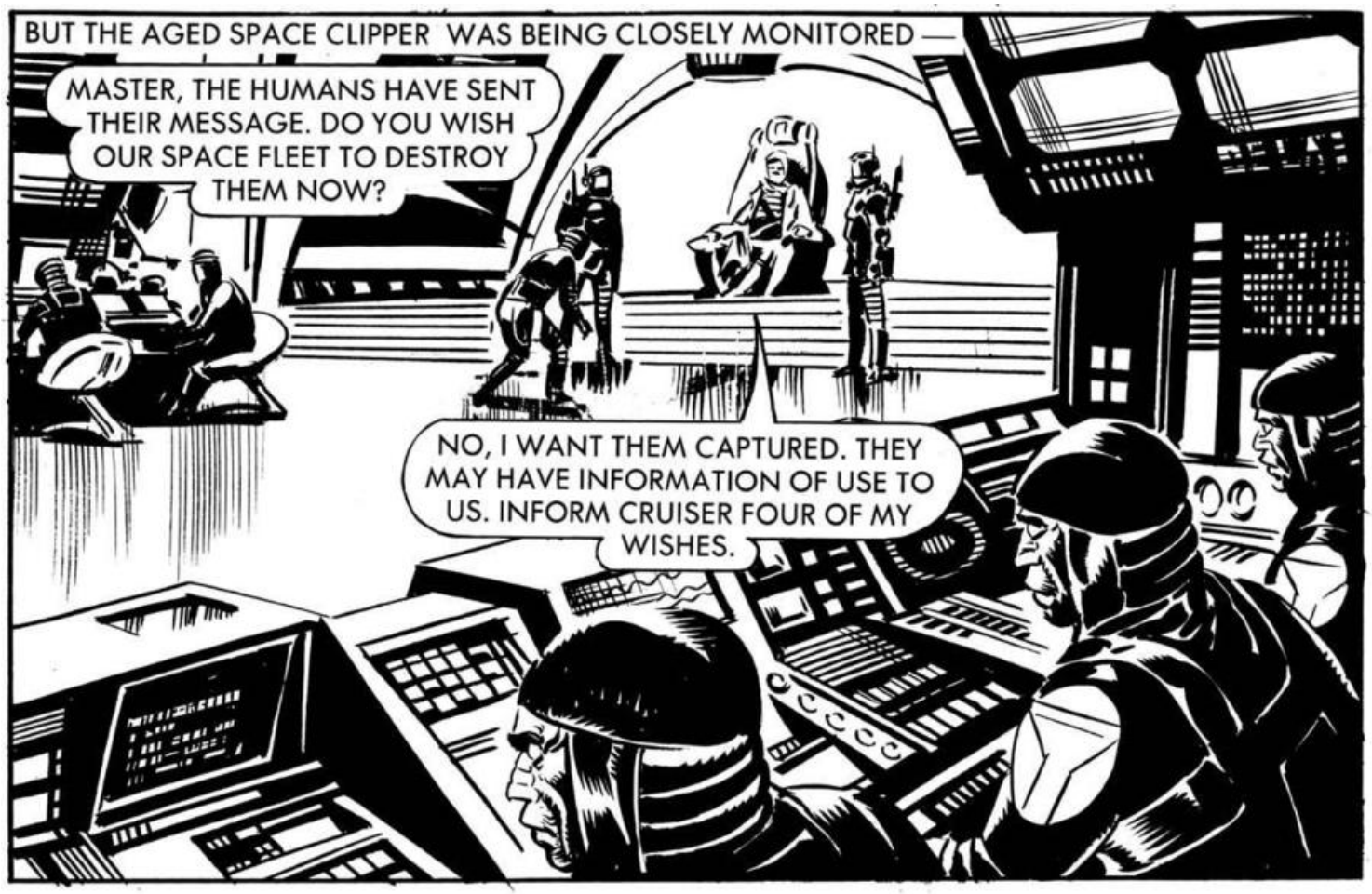
BUT THE NEXIONS HAD DETECTED THE CLIPPER'S ION TRAIL —
LAUNCH STRIKE FORCE AND DESTROY ENEMY VESSEL.


BUT THE STRATO-FIGHTERS WERE NOT THE CLIPPER'S ONLY PROBLEM —
THERE'S SO MUCH STATIC IN THE ATMOSPHERE THAT NO MESSAGE CAN REACH SPACE.
THREE ENEMY CRAFT ARE CONVERGING — ESCAPE PATTERN OPERATED.

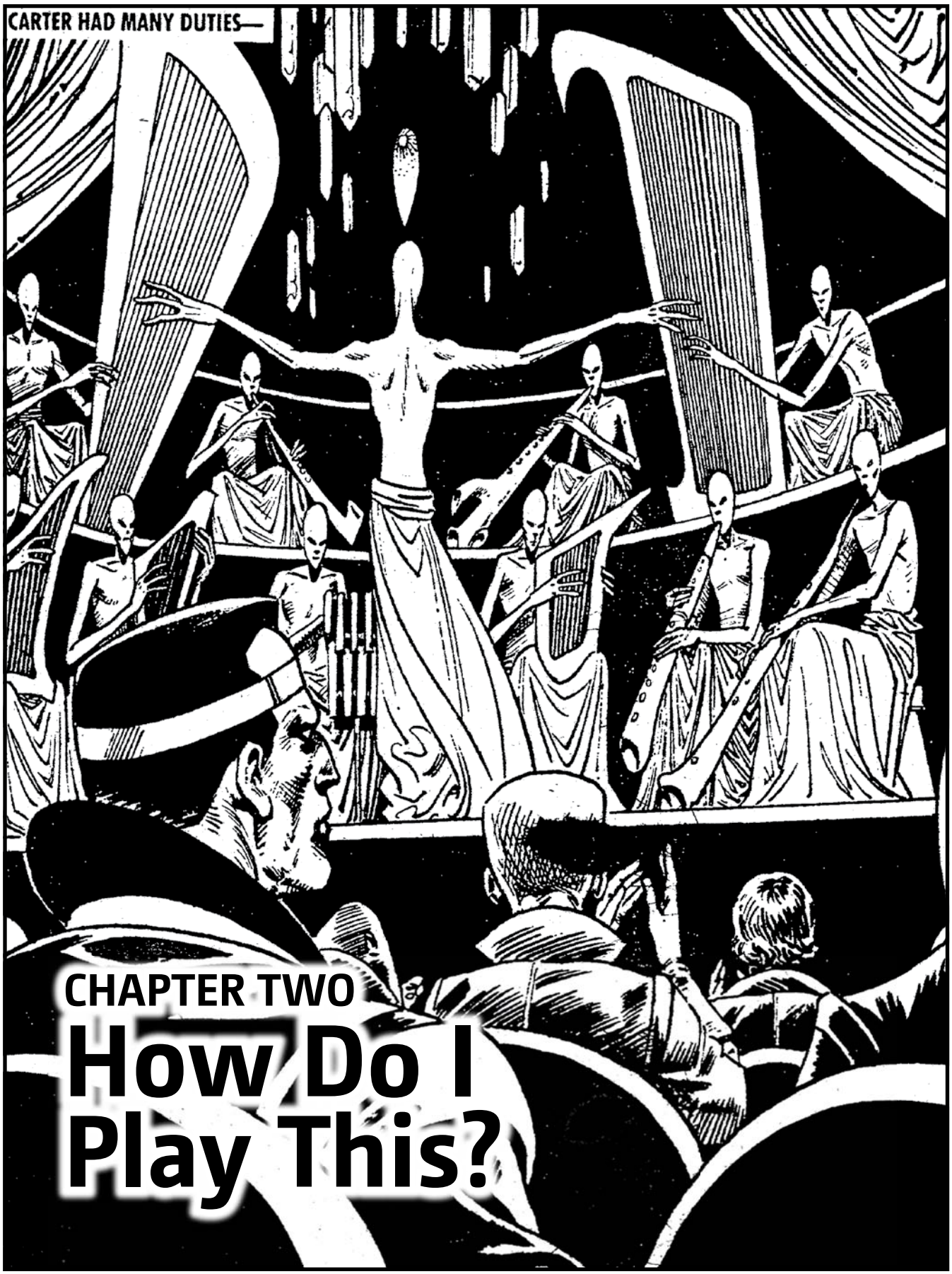

THE NEXIONS ATTACKED VICIOUSLY, AND THE CLIPPER'S AGE BEGAN TO SHOW —
A FEW MORE TWISTS LIKE THAT AND THE RETROS WILL BE BURNED OUT.


MIK CHANGED TO MANUAL CONTROL.
STRATOFIGHTERS ARE RESTRICTED TO ATMOSPHERIC WARFARE. IF WE CAN REACH SPACE WE'LL BE FREE.
THEIR ACCELERATION IS TWICE OURS! WE WON'T MAKE IT.

THE STRATOFIGHTERS MOVED IN FOR THE KILL.
THEY'VE GOT US!
ATTENTION STRIKE FORCE, BREAK OFF ATTACK. REPEAT, BREAK OFF ATTACK.
MOMENTS LATER THE CLIPPER ESCAPED INTO SPACE.
WE'RE SPACESIDE! COMPUTER, PROGRAMME A SIGNAL AND SEND IT TO EARTH. ONCE THE HOME FLEET GETS HERE THE NEXIONS ARE FINISHED.
AFFIRMATIVE, PROGRAMME INITIATED.
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THEY DIDN'T DESTROY US! WE WERE IN THEIR SIGHTS.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHY, IT'S THEIR LOSS. ONCE THE FLEET RECEIVE THE SIGNAL THEY'LL WARP IN AND MOP UP.
COMPUTER, PLOT A SLOW PATH TO EARTH. WE'VE JUST ENOUGH POWER TO GET US THERE.


BUT THE AGED SPACE CLIPPER WAS BEING CLOSELY MONITORED —
MASTER, THE HUMANS HAVE SENT THEIR MESSAGE. DO YOU WISH OUR SPACE FLEET TO DESTROY THEM NOW?
NO, I WANT THEM CAPTURED. THEY MAY HAVE INFORMATION OF USE TO US. INFORM CRUISER FOUR OF MY WISHES.

THE CLIPPER PREPARED TO WARP TOWARDS EARTH —
ONCE WE'RE OVER THIS ASTEROID WE'LL BEGIN ACCELERATION. IT'LL BE GOOD TO SEE EARTH AGAIN.
WARNING! I DETECT A NEARBY PHOTON SOURCE. SUGGEST YOU RETREAT . . .



CHAPTER TWO

How Do I Play This?

How Do I Play This?

Here's a basic outline of the Fate rules and how to play ***Starblazer***, some simple concepts, what things mean and what stuff on the character sheet means.

The cast of *Starblazer Adventures*

There's a bunch of names for what people do in the game, whether real life players or fictional characters.

Story Teller – also called Games Master, DM or GM in other games. Helps the group tell a story, devises the plot, background, setting and enemies, plays the roles of Extras and enemies when you encounter them and is responsible for knowing the rules and making sure the players have a great time.

Player Character – the character devised by the player. The fictional person they will explore the story with. They'll tell the Story Teller what their player character does in the situations they are put in and how they respond. The character is described by a number of things such as Skills and Aspects which explain what they can and can't do and how good they are at it.

Extras – Also called Non Player Characters or NPCs in other games. We call them Extras because they're not important to the storyline. They're the cast of people on the fringe of the story, people met along the way, all briefly 'played' by the Story Teller to enhance your experience. They are usually described by their highest rated three Skills and any other defining features

Minions – Minions are the faceless hordes of aliens, guards and other bad guys that are a hindrance to the player progress through the story. They're most likely described by one Skill rating – e.g you might have Average+1 palace guards which means all their Skills are at Average+1 for any Skill checks.

Companions – Companions are the close allies and supporters of the player characters who accompany them on their adventures. They are described more simply than player characters.

Named Characters – Other major characters in the story who have a name as opposed to Guard #3. They might be major players such as the player character's boss, a major ally or enemy. It could be the main henchmen or the player's arch nemesis, the evil alien or mad scientist. They'll be described just like player characters.

Characters: The Basics

Characters in ***Starblazer*** are made up of a number of things which describe who you are, what you can do and why you are special. The fun way of creating them is through a series of phases (page 30) or you can jump right in (page 28). We use the character sheet to record this information and help you to understand what you can and can't do during the game. Here's a sample player character, Brandon Carter.

Player: That's you, the person playing this game

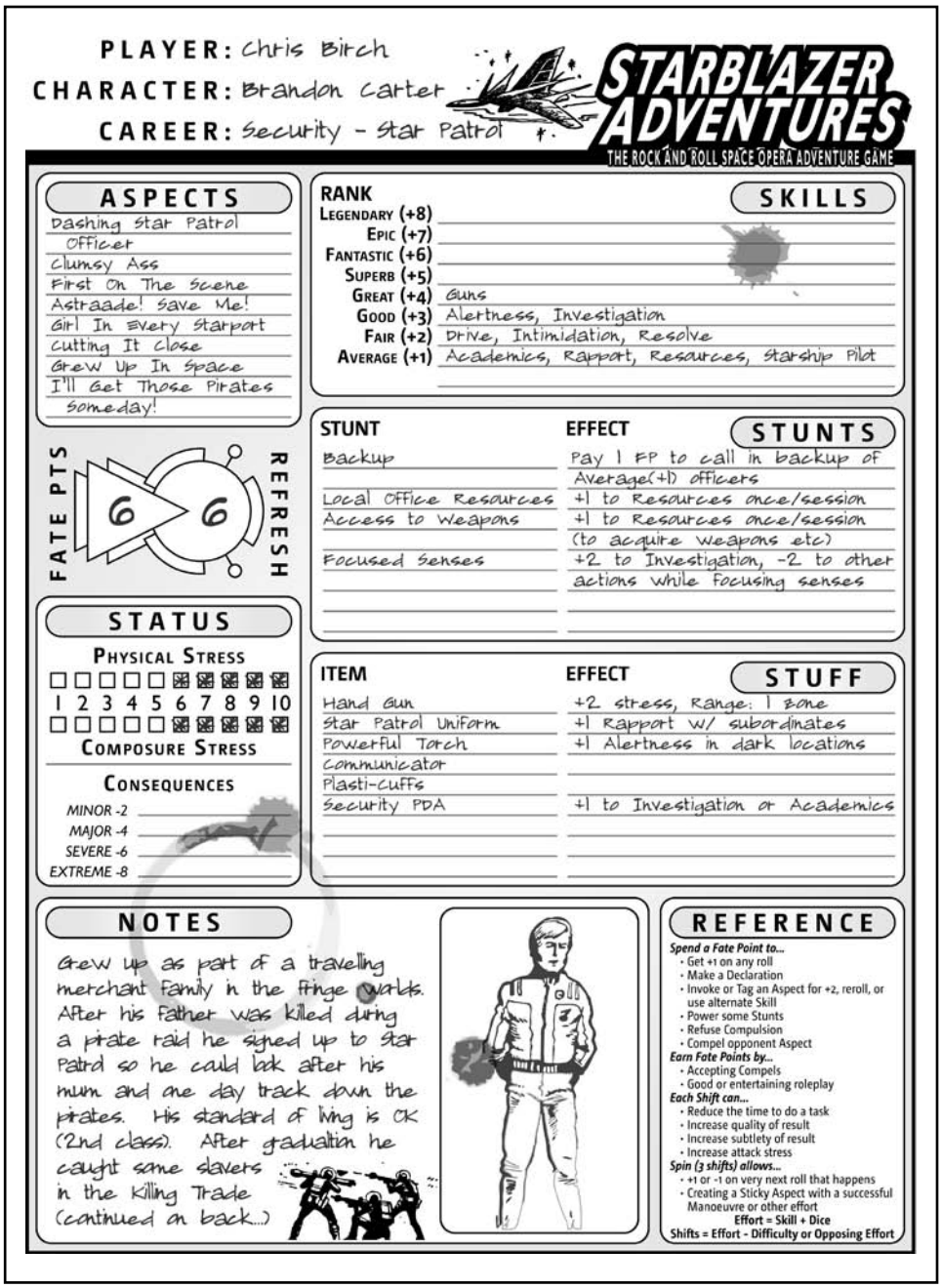
Character Name: That's the name for your imaginary character you will play in the game. See the list of ***Starblazer*** heroes on page 510 for some ideas.

Career: Which (if any) career path your character has followed

Aspects: Aspects describe who a character is as a person, what motivates or drives them, their career and history or what resources they might have access to. They can be used to give you bonuses in situations where they are relevant.

Fate Points: Fate points are used to get bonuses, to briefly take control of the story and to 'power' Aspects and some Stunts.

Refresh: That's your budget—how many fate points you get at the start of each session.


PLAYER: Chris Birch
CHARACTER: Brandon Carter
CAREER: Security - Star Patrol
STARBLAZER ADVENTURES
THE ROCK AND ROLL SPACE OPERA ADVENTURE GAME
ASPECTS
Dashing Star Patrol Officer
Clumsy Ass
First On The Scene
Astraade! Save Me!
Girl In Every Starport
Cutting It Close
Grew Up In Space
I'll Get Those Pirates Someday!
RANK
SKILLS
Legendary (+8)
Epic (+7)
Fantastic (+6)
Superb (+5)
Great (+4) Guns
Good (+3) Alertness, Investigation
Fair (+2) Drive, Intimidation, Resolve
Average (+1) Academics, Rapport, Resources, Starship Pilot
FATE PTS 6 6 REFRESH
STUNT
EFFECT
STUNTS
Backup
Pay 1 FP to call in backup of Average(+1) officers
Local Office Resources
+1 to Resources once/session
Access to Weapons
+1 to Resources once/session (to acquire weapons etc)
Focused Senses
+2 to Investigation, -2 to other actions while focusing senses
STATUS
Physical Stress
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Composure Stress
Consequences
MINOR -2
MAJOR -4
SEVERE -6
EXTREME -8
ITEM
EFFECT
STUFF
Hand Gun
+2 stress, Range: 1 zone
Star Patrol Uniform
+1 Rapport w/ subordinates
Powerful Torch
+1 Alertness in dark locations
Communicator
Plasti-cuffs
Security PDA
+1 to Investigation or Academics
NOTES
Grew up as part of a travelling merchant family in the fringe worlds. After his father was killed during a pirate raid he signed up to star Patrol so he could look after his mum and one day track down the pirates. His standard of living is OK (2nd class). After graduation he caught some slavers in the Killing Trade (continued on back...)
REFERENCE
Spend a Fate Point to...
• Get +1 on any roll
• Make a Declaration
• Invoke or Tag an Aspect for +2, reroll, or use alternate Skill
• Power some Stunts
• Refuse Compulsion
• Compel opponent Aspect
Earn Fate Points by...
• Accepting Compels
• Good or entertaining roleplay
Each Shift can...
• Reduce the time to do a task
• Increase quality of result
• Increase subtlety of result
• Increase attack stress
Spin (3 shifts) allows...
• +1 or -1 on very next roll that happens
• Creating a Sticky Aspect with a successful Manoeuvre or other effort
Effort = Skill + Dice
Shifts = Effort - Difficulty or Opposing Effort

Stress: As you lose in social or physical conflicts you take **Stress** and can be 'Taken out' if you run out.

Consequences: Characters can opt to take a Consequence to reduce the amount of stress suffered in a conflict. Consequences have increasingly bad effects on you and you can only take three of them.

Notes: Background info, where you were brought up & what kind of life you have now and if there was a twist of fate that affects your life. This is also a place to write down any other information about the character such as how you know the other player's characters and what ***Starblazer*** Legends you've experienced together

Skills: Characters, ships, organisations, monsters—everything in ***Starblazer Adventures*** is described by Skills which are ranked from Terrible to Legendary. If you need to use a Skill but it isn't listed on your character sheet, assume it is Mediocre.

Stunts: Stunts are related to Skills and show that you have some kind of speciality or aptitude which gives you a bonus in certain situations.

Stuff: ***Starblazer*** characters usually come across gear which is useful to them – Starships, gadgets, weapons and strange alien artefacts. This is where to write the name of the gear down and any bonuses they provide.

Starblazer Adventures
Rules Summary

The Fate rules, which we use to power ***Starblazer Adventures***, are an amazing tool to help you tell great stories. This is a simple introduction to the rules and once you read this have a look at more detailed sections such as Chapter 10 How To Do Things and Chapter 11 Running The Game

The Ladder

Most things in ***Starblazer*** are described using the ladder below (when we say **"the ladder"** throughout the text, this is what we mean). The adjectives are used to explain the quality of things in the game such as character or organisation Skills, vehicle equipment, Starship systems, the costs of things or the difficulty of doing something.

+8:	Legendary
+7:	Epic
+6:	Fantastic
+5:	Superb
+4:	Great
+3:	Good
+2:	Fair
+1:	Average
0:	Mediocre
-1:	Poor
-2:	Terrible
-3:	Abysmal

For example someone might be a Good Pilot or Average at Academics. There could be a Great Beam weapon on a Starship or a patrol car could have Superb speed. A weapon might have a cost of Good or the strange power of a giant alien monster might be Legendary. The Star Patrol might have Fair Resources (Ships) as an organisation Skill or it might be a Superb task to break into the arms locker aboard a pirate ship.

We normally use the adjective and the number such as Good (+3) but it's up to you.

On this scale, Average represents the level of capability that someone who does something regularly and possibly professionally, but not exceptionally. Most people are Average at the things they do for a living, like Science for a scientist, and are Mediocre or Poor at most other things. It is only when they are driven to excel that they surpass those limits.

Starblazer heroes push the very boundaries of what "normal" people are capable of, and as such, could be Great, or even Superb at whatever their central passion is. This means that heroes are genuinely exceptional individuals, and are frequently recognized as such.

Rolling the Dice, Shifts & Effort

When you need to roll dice in ***Starblazer***, take two different coloured six sided dice, and decide which will be the 'minus' dice before you roll. Roll the dice and subtract the minus dice from the other dice and add the result to your Skill level.

Your total is compared against another number (a difficulty or the total rolled by an opponent) to determine success and is referred to as your **effort**.

For example if your Skill is Fair (+2) and you roll a +3 on the dice your effort is 5.

> Rolling a six sided dice less another six sided dice will give you a number from -5 to +5, including 0. The results on the dice mean that on average you'll get zero or close to zero. Since doing things usually involves adding the roll of the dice to your Skill level it means you'll be as good as your Skill says you are but occasionally you might do better, or worse.

If your effort is higher than the number required, you get **shifts** equal to the margin between your roll and the number, which can be spent on special effects that enhance the quality of your action.

For example, if you effort is 5 and the difficulty is Good (+3) then you have succeeded with 2 shifts

Skills

For player characters Skills represent the things that they are trained to do or have experience in. For Starships they represent the equipment installed onboard, for giant monsters it could be how intelligent or strong they are, for Star Empires it's their resources, the power of their navy, diplomatic or security services.

Skills are described using the adjectives and numbers from the Ladder. For example you could have Weapons - Great (+4) or Science - Fair (+2). Character, Star Empire and Starship 'character' sheets have a pyramid of boxes where you fill in your chosen Skills at the level you want them to be. Depending on the level of the Skill you get greater or smaller bonuses to dice rolls in the game. But as with all things you are somewhat limited and can't take every skill on the highest level. You must adhere to the following rule: To have a Skill on a certain level you need to have

1 Great, 2 Good, 3 Fair, 4 Average

2 Good, 4 Fair, 6 Average

1 Good, 5 Fair, 7 Average

at least the same number of Skills on the next level down plus one more.

For example if you have one Skill on the Good (+3) level, you need to have at least two Skills at the Fair (+2) level, three Skills at the Average (+1) level and so on.

That's why the Skills form a pyramid shape and this all is intended to balance things out. See page 98 for more information on Skills.

Stunts

Stunts are related to Skills and describe ways in which you can temporarily get a bonus within game play – perhaps a bonus to the dice, the ability to do something automatically, permission to do something that others can't, etc.

If this is one of those situations you can use its bonus, which is usually an effect, or a +1 or +2 to a specific task. Generally you only get bonuses of +2 in more limited situations. More powerful Stunts often require the character to spend a Fate point to use.

Aspects

Aspects can be anything descriptive like 'Lucky Dog' or 'Married to the Law'. It also includes various career descriptions which unlock certain special Stunts. Aspects can be **invoked** or **tagged** to briefly make an impact on your situation and possibly help you in some way but they can also be **compelled** to hinder you. The cool thing is you **earn a Fate point** when one of your Aspects is compelled. See **Playing The Game** later in this chapter for how to use Aspects.

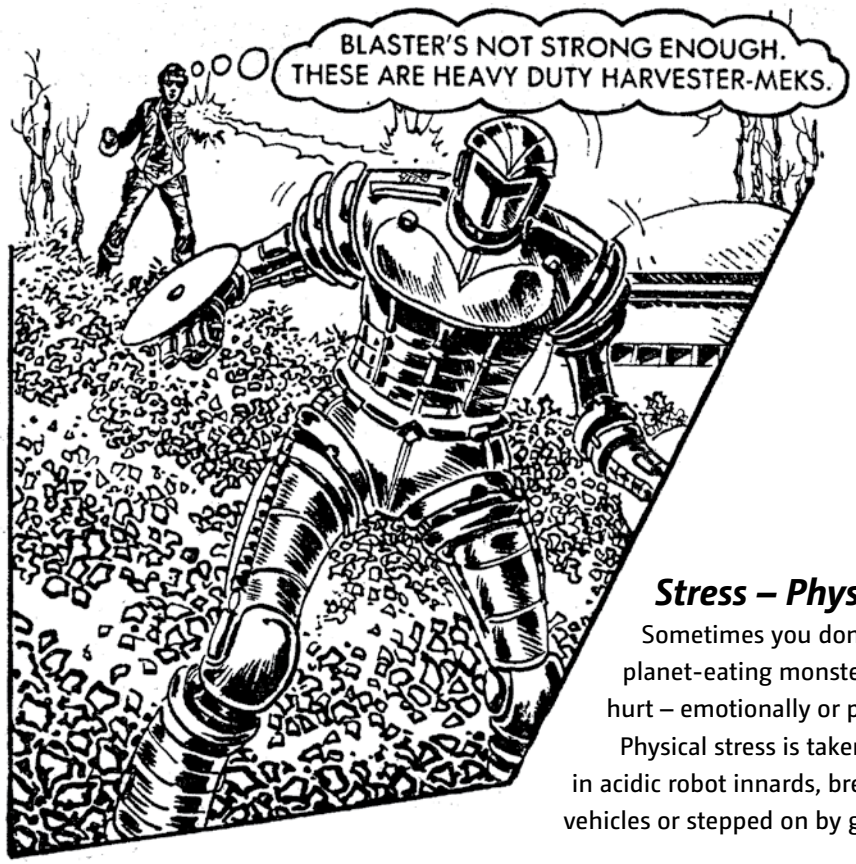
Fate Points

Each player has a certain number of Fate points and they can earn more by playing their character authentically (as the character would act), in some cases making mistakes.

Normally, a character starts every session with 10 Fate points less the number of Stunts they have, this is called the **refresh total**. If they have less, they regain as many Fate points as it would take to equal their refresh. If they have more, they keep their current total.

So, didn't do so well on the dice roll? AFTER you have rolled the dice, you can **spend one Fate point** to do one of several things:

- add +1 to the total of any dice roll
- to power a Stunt if they are particularly powerful
- to make a minor narrative declaration in the game outside of rolling dice. The Story Teller has veto power over this, but should strongly consider any declarations that can be justified by your Aspects
- Invoke an appropriate Aspect which lets you add +2 to the dice roll OR re-roll the dice
- Tag an Aspect belonging to the scene or another character



Stress – Physical & Composure

Sometimes you don't get on with people, nature, gravity or giant planet-eating monsters and when that happens, you usually get hurt – emotionally or physically.

Physical stress is taken when you're getting shot at, hit, covered in acidic robot innards, breathing poisonous gas, falling off moving vehicles or stepped on by giant creatures.

Composure stress is taken when you are insulted, traumatized, embarrassed, scared right out of your little printed rocket pants (come on admit it!), shamed or scared. Basically we're talking more than a few harsh words, this is scary hurtful stuff but it doesn't actually harm you physically.

Stress is a measure of how hurt you are, and when you take a total of 5 Stress (some Stunts allow to take more than 5 Physical or Composure Stress) in either Physical or Composure Stress you're out of the picture, what we call Taken Out. What exactly that means is up to the Story Teller but it could be dead, mindless, scared to death, unconscious and captured, having alien tentacles doing unspeakable and irreversible things to you. Believe me it's bad.

However it's not all bad just yet, Stress clears or heals at the end of a scene, unless the next scene follows straight on, for example in the case of a chase or on-going conflict. It's only when you take too much Stress that you have to take more longer lasting Consequences (see below) to avoid being Taken Out.

Consequences

Consequences can be taken to absorb stress from a conflict. They include Minor (absorbs 2 Stress), Major (absorbs 4 Stress), Severe (absorbs 6 Stress) and Extreme consequences (absorbs 8 Stress) and could be anything from a sprained ankle or being emotionally shaken to a terrible chest wound or being left seriously traumatized by what you saw. Characters can only take a maximum of three of these four consequences. See page 220 for more information on Consequences and healing.

Some character cannot take consequences – these are usually Minions, Extras and possibly Companions. They may also be limited to taking less stress than player characters. This could be anything from 1 stress for a basic guard up to 5 stress for notable henchmen.

Playing The Game

This next part summarises how character's attributes are used and how to run the game.

Aspects

A character's, Starship's, organisation's or monster's Aspects are used either in a positive (called an **Invocation**) or a negative (called a **Compel**) way. You can also use the Aspects of others or those placed on objects or scenes; this is called a **Tag**.

Invocation

Pay a Fate point and add +2 to your effort, reroll the dice or make a declaration

After a Skill roll is made, if the player can convince the Story Teller that a particular Aspect of theirs is appropriate to the situation, the Story Teller may allow the player to spend a **Fate point** and add 2 to the current effort, reroll the dice or make a declaration. Multiple Aspects can be invoked on one roll, but no single Aspect can be invoked more than once at a time, though they can be used as often as they are relevant.

For example...

Brandon is exploring an abandoned Starship and discovers that a Sirian Serpent has made its home in the hold. During the fight, Brandon rolls badly and decided to pay a Fate point to Invoke his Dashing Star Patrol Officer Aspect, arguing that he's been taught how to fight these vicious beasts. The Story Teller agrees and let's Brandon re-roll the dice.

Making a declaration with a Fate point momentarily gives you control of the story to add or describe something which may be of use to you. It's always at the discretion of the Story Teller and should never be something too powerful.

For example...

Brandon Carter is trying to repair the star drive on the abandoned ship but doesn't have any tools. Brandon could pay a Fate point to declare that it would be standard practice to have a tool kit on board a Starship.

Compel

Gain fate points.

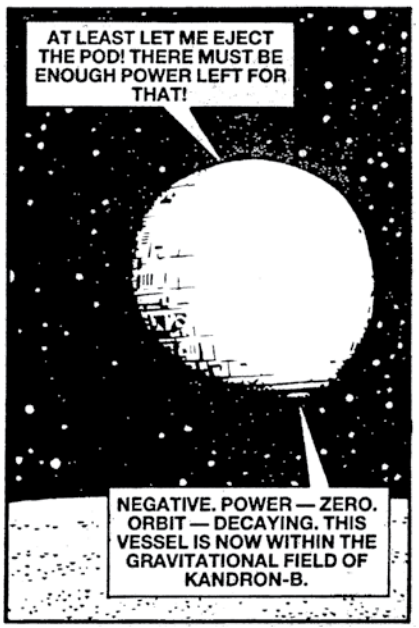
If the Story Teller decides that an Aspect limits a character's available choices in a situation (or the player can convince the Story Teller of the same), the character must react in a way appropriate to the Aspect. This gains the player a Fate point. The player may also decide to not accept the limitation on his actions, but must spend a fate point to do this.

For example...

Brandon Carter is running away from the Star Baron guards and the Story Teller says, "hey Brandon, you know you have that Aspect, 'Clumsy Ass'? Well I figure you looked back to see if the guards were still chasing you and tripped over the power cable". He slides a Fate point over the table to Brandon. The guards might catch him now, but Brandon now has a Fate point he can use for a bonus later on. Remember this is about story telling, not winning. The fun is in letting Brandon succumb to 'fate' and seeing what happens. No one's out to kill your character in these rules, it's about enjoying the situation and the challenge of how you will deal with the situations you end up in.

For example...

Brandon Carter has the Dashing Star Patrol Officer Aspect and is trying to convince the Admiral to let him command the Cruiser Revenge. Let's say they are at a meeting of the Terran War Council and the scene has an Aspect of 'Fear & Trepidation'. Brandon's Rapport Skill is low but his Intimidation is high so he could argue that his character could tag the scene's Aspect to let him use his higher Intimidation Skill to convince the Admiral that they need you Brandon out there in the Cruiser Revenge. For the rest of the scene Brandon can use Intimidation instead of Rapport in interaction with the Admiral, but after this scene would go back to using Rapport.


AT LEAST LET ME EJECT THE POD! THERE MUST BE ENOUGH POWER LEFT FOR THAT!
NEGATIVE. POWER — ZERO. ORBIT — DECAYING. THIS VESSEL IS NOW WITHIN THE GRAVITATIONAL FIELD OF KANDRON-B.

Tag

As per invocation.

If someone knows an Aspect that belongs to another character, object, or scene, they can invoke that Aspect as though it were their own by paying a Fate point and describing how the Aspect is appropriate. They would then get a bonus or reroll as if they had invoked one of their own Aspects. If a character discovers or causes an Aspect to be created (and assigned to a Scene, Character or an Object) such as 'Slippery Floor' by pushing over a barrel of oil, then the first tag of that Aspect is free. Anyone else may now tag that Aspect at the cost of a Fate point.

Using Alternative Skills with a Tag

You can also invoke a scene or location's Aspect to argue that one of your Skills could be used in place of another.

Hidden Aspects

Sometime scenes will have hidden Aspects that the characters will not know about. If a player guesses a hidden Aspect (or is pretty close) then the Story Teller can reward them with a free tag and that Aspect is now available for any other character to use by paying a Fate point. In the example above the Aspect of 'Fear & Trepidation' could have been a hidden Aspect.

Doing Things...

When a character, creature, Starship or Star Empire is trying to do something and no one is trying to stop them it's an un-opposed task. If there's trying to stop them, it's a conflict.

Doing Something Un-Opposed

When a character tries to do something, take the level of their most appropriate Skill (e.g. an Average Skill is +1, Fair is +2 and so on) and add it to the roll of the dice. They must beat a difficulty number to succeed.

Difficulties are measured on the same ladder as everything else. For instance, it might be a Mediocre (+0) difficulty to jumpstart a battered old Starship, but a Good (+3) difficulty to repair that same ship after a serious breakdown.

If you're the Story Teller and you're trying to work out a difficulty for something a character is trying to do – it's pretty easy. If the task is an everyday task like driving a car down a street don't even roll the dice, let them succeed! However if it requires some Skill but

is not difficult tell the player they are faced with an Average (+1) task (or maybe that's an everyday task done under pressure). That means they need to get a total of +1 with their Skill and the roll of the dice added together. If it's a more difficult task but you're not sure how difficult, just start with Average (+1) then for every extra problem you think the character faces add +1, for example, if they need to do it quickly, are being shot at, the object they're moving is really heavy, or very delicate, or it's a long distance to jump.

For example...

Let's take Brandon Carter, the Star Patrol officer. He's following a suspect in his patrol car. A fairly standard task for Brandon is driving the patrol car and pursuing the suspect – that should be an Average (+1) difficulty. If it's more complex like weaving through traffic and chasing the suspect, something Brandon would need experience at, it should be a Fair (+2) difficulty. If it's really complex like swerving around on-coming traffic, pursuing the suspect, whilst being shot at by the suspect's accomplice, that's a Great (+4) difficulty. Here's how that was worked out. As you can see it's pretty simple:

A Star Patrol officer, driving a patrol car (Mediocre +0), pursuing a suspect (+1). Total +1, Average difficulty.

A Star Patrol officer driving a patrol car (Mediocre +0), pursuing a suspect (+1), through traffic (+1). Total +2 Fair difficulty.

A Star Patrol officer driving a patrol car (Mediocre +0), pursuing a suspect (+1), through traffic (+1), that is oncoming (+1), whilst being shot at (+1). Total +4, Great difficulty

Remember the story is more important than working out numbers, if you're not sure just quickly pick a number between 1 and 5 depending on how difficult you want the task to be. See page 235 for more information on setting difficulties.

Shifts are used by the Story Teller, to determine whether character's efforts have any extra effect such as whether they completed the task quicker, more accurately, caused more damage or did something cool.

For example...

Brandon is trying to reprogram a renegade robot. He has the Skill Science Mediocre (+0). Let's say that it's a Fair (+2) difficulty task because he needs to do it before it recovers from a Stun grenade (+1) and it's an unusual robot he's not seen before (+1). That means Brandon needs a total of +2 on the dice. Let's say he rolls and get a total Effort of +4 (0 from his Skill and +4 from the roll). That means he got 2 Shifts. In this case the Story Teller suggests that whilst restoring the robot's programming Brandon also found a clue as to who had ordered the robot to attack the Chief of Police.

Conflicts

Any time two or more characters are opposed in a way that can't be quickly or cleanly resolved, use this system to determine what happens.

Running Conflicts

Conflicts start like so:

Frame the Scene

The Story Teller tells the player's what Aspects are present in the scene that they would know about (but not any hidden Aspects) and where everyone is located in an abstract measurement called **zones**. Zones are used to determine how movement is handled in the scene – you can spend a shift from any roll to move one zone and perform your action. If you

need to move more than one zone, that is your action for the round and is handled with a Skill roll.

Establish Initiative

Sometimes, the Story Teller will use a Skill-based system to determine the turn order for the round. Sometimes, a different person will take the first action in every successive round, going clockwise or counter-clockwise from the Story Teller, according to your group's preference.

Then, when it's your turn, you:

Take Action

Describe what your character is doing and, if necessary, roll an appropriate Skill. This will either be resolved as a **simple action** (no opposition) or a **contest**. If it's a contest, whoever has to defend against your action or does something to counteract your effort, rolls an appropriate Skill.

If you win the contest, or if you succeed at the simple action, you can spend the shifts you generate to resolve your action. If you lose the contest, your action fails. If you lose the contest by three or more, the defender gets **spin**, which he can then use to add or subtract 1 from the effort of the next immediate action, provided he can find a way to reasonably narrate his character's influence.

If you choose not to take an action on your turn, you make all your defense rolls at +2. You may also **supplement** an action with a simple action (like moving and attacking, flicking a switch, or drawing a weapon and attacking) by taking a -1 penalty to your roll, effectively spending a shift in advance. In general, a supplementary action shouldn't be anything that would normally require a separate roll.

Resolve Action

You can spend shifts to resolve your action in a number of ways.

If it's a direct attack, you can inflict **stress** on your target at a value equivalent to the number of shifts you gained (plus any bonus damage from weapons). The target ticks off the number of stress on his stress track and then checks to see if he's been **taken out** (if the stress value is higher than the last open box on his track). If he has any consequences left, he can choose to take a consequence, which is an Aspect that represents lasting effects from the fight and can be tagged, instead of receiving stress. A Minor consequence absorbs 2 stress, a Major 4 stress, a Severe 6 stress and an Extreme consequence absorbs 8 stress. If the character cannot take any further consequences and has no stress boxes left they are taken out. This means the character is very close to death and must be stabilised if they want to survive.

For example...

Brandon Carter our brave Star Patrol officer is hated by Jed Tharrow, a rather bent cop who sees Brandon as a threat to the scam he's got going at the precinct. Brandon's obviously too clean and straight to ignore what Jed's up to so Jed tries to intimidate Brandon. His Intimidate Skill is Good (+3) and Brandon's Resolve is Fair (+2). The Story Teller says there are no bonuses to either side so both characters roll the dice. Jed rolls a 0 for a total Effort of +3 (0 roll plus +3 Skill), whilst Brandon's player smirks as his dice come up +4 for a total Effort of +6 (+4 roll plus +2 Skill). Brandon's obviously not easily scared by Jed and inflicts 3 Shifts composure stress on Jed. Jed could take a Minor consequence 'wary of Brandon' to reduce the composure stress by 2 and then tick off 1 composure stress box.

As a bonus Brandon also generated spin because he beat Jed by +3 or more. This means that Brandon can add 1 to his next roll or deduct 1 from Jed's next roll. He has to describe how this happens so Brandon says Jed is so shocked by Brandon's refusal to be bullied that he is on the defence when Brandon demands to know who he really works for.

We'll leave them 'discussing operational procedure' in the corridor for now...

Overflow

If a character inflicts more damage than the target can absorb you can use the wasted Shifts as a bonus in a Supplemental action (which cannot be an attack or offensive manoeuvre). For example, Brandon takes out a guard who has 5 Stress with a total of 6 shifts, and use the 1 overflow to move one zone away. See page 214 for a description of zones.

Manoeuvres

If it's not a direct attack, you resolve your action as a **manoeuvre**, if you're trying to prevent something from happening, that's called a **block**. Your shifts become the difficulty for anyone to try doing whatever you're trying to block. Blocks have to be fairly specific in context.

Manoeuvres cover actions such as moving, defending yourself, blocking something from happening, or an attempt to affect or change the environment in some way (which could cause an Aspect to be created).

- If you're moving as your action, each shift you spend allows you to move one zone. If you're performing any other miscellaneous action, resolve it the same as you would outside of combat.
- If you're trying to inflict some kind of condition on your opponent or the scene that isn't directly damaging, like blinding or confusing them, you spend all your shifts to put a temporary Aspect on your target which you can then tag. The first tag on a temporary Aspect you inflict is free.

For example: pushing a stack of containers over to block the approaching robots or pulling a cord to trip up the chasing guards. This could tag the robots or guards with the temporary Aspect 'stumbling' which you could give to one of the characters waiting in ambush to immediately get a free +2 bonus in their attack

Concluding or Continuing the Conflict

Conflicts continue or conclude like so:

Begin a New Round

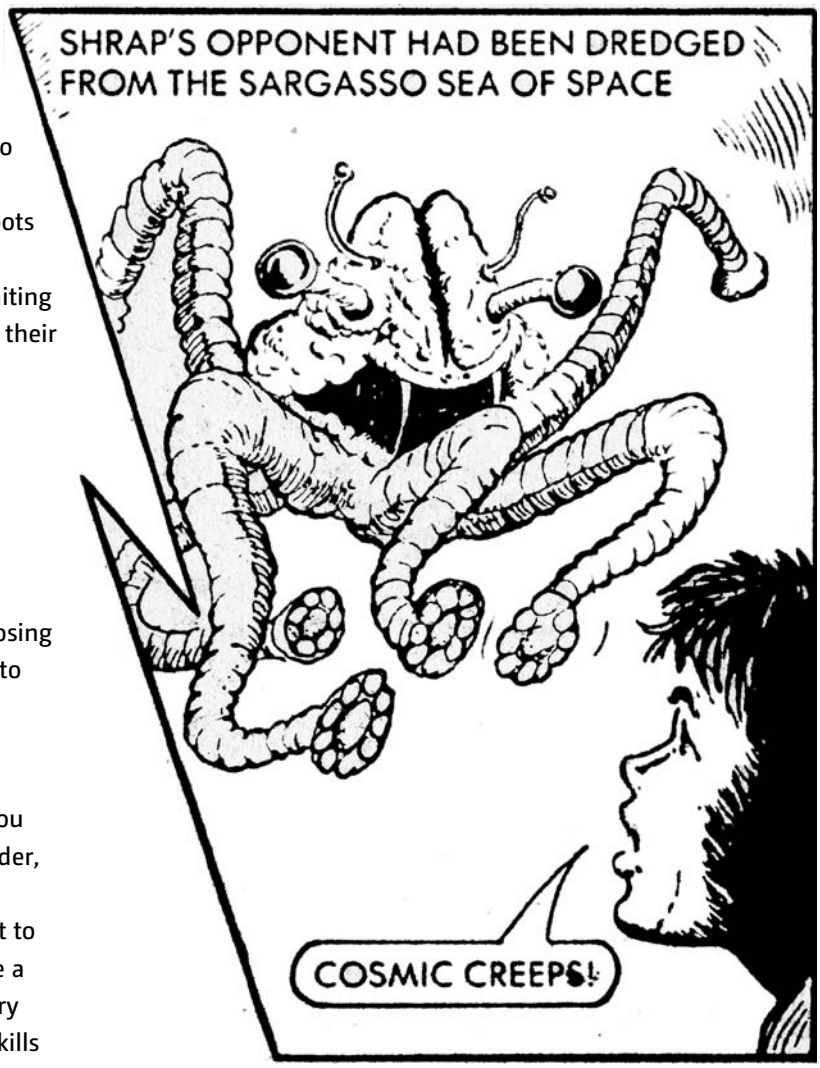
After everyone has taken and resolved an action, begin the process again, continuing until all opposing parties are **Taken Out** or have **Conceded** (chosen to lose by their own terms).

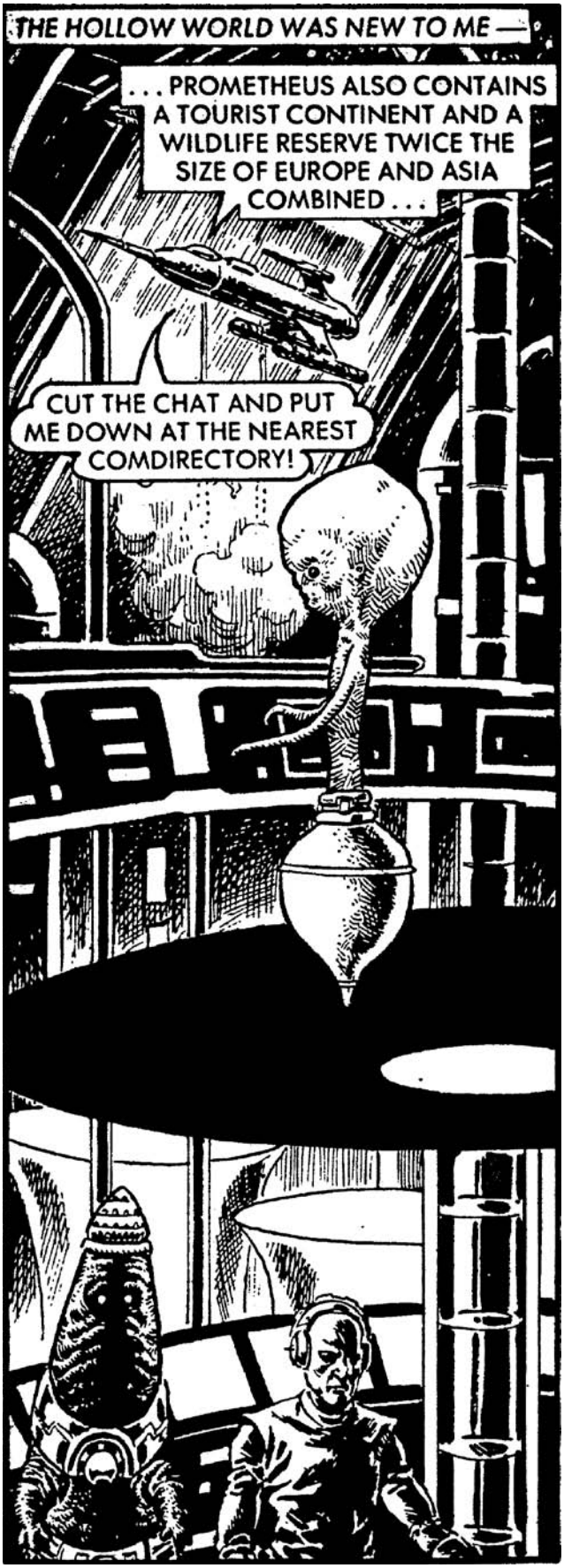
Now What?

And... That's basically it. It's pretty simple once you get your head around using the dice and the Ladder, invoking & tagging Aspects and how to use Fate points. Remember as a Story Teller you're not out to beat the players, you're working together to have a brilliant time telling an amazing story. Don't worry if you get difficulties wrong, choose the wrong Skills for tasks, or forget to use Spin, Fate points, Overflow or Stunts. It's just a story and the most important thing is whether you all had fun exploring it together. You'll pick up the important stuff as you play, and it's actually easier to learn by playing than sitting there reading this book!

You can go ahead and read the rest of the chapters when you're ready. They go in to far more detail on playing the game and cover the Skills, Aspects, Stunts, how to create and fly Starships, how to play Star Empires, how to fight Giant monsters, and much more.

If you want to go ahead and create a full blown character now, turn to Chapter 3. If you want to get playing right away though, there's a really quick and simple way of creating characters 'on the fly' below. Have a look at the introductory adventure on page 569 if you want something even simpler for people new to games like this, but this will require a little preparation on your part.




THE HOLLOW WORLD WAS NEW TO ME —
. . . PROMETHEUS ALSO CONTAINS A TOURIST CONTINENT AND A WILDLIFE RESERVE TWICE THE SIZE OF EUROPE AND ASIA COMBINED . . .
CUT THE CHAT AND PUT ME DOWN AT THE NEAREST COMDIRECTORY!

Creating Characters On The Fly

Simply pick a name, and if you want write down a good and a bad Aspect. Seriously—that's it. Don't worry; you can add more Aspects, Skills and Stunts as you go. Each player is given a Fate point for both Aspects they came up with.

Each player starts with 5 physical & 5 composure stress and can take up to three consequences from Minor, Major, Severe or Extreme.

Usually you would start a game with 10 Fate points, less the number of Stunts you have. However, for the first session, start with 1 for each Aspect the players come up with for their character. Every time a player thinks of another cool Aspect or Stunt to add to their character give them another Fate point up to a total of 5.

Now to Skills (see page 98 for full descriptions), this is the easy bit. Say the characters all jump in to a Starship but no one's got Starship Pilot as a Skill. Someone fancy it? No problem, add it in to their Skill pyramid at whatever Skill level they like, or simply roll it at Mediocre +0.

1 Great, 2 Good,
3 Fair, 4 Average

Come up with a cool Aspect? Great! Write it down. Read about a great Stunt (page 145) in the rulebook, great just add it.

In this way you can build characters as you play without having to spend too much time dreaming them up. It's especially good for people who've not played a game like this before or who don't yet understand what Aspects or Stunts do, or what Skills would be cool for their characters. Often by just playing the game you quickly understand why Stunts or Aspects are so useful.

Players starting in this way can add up to 20 points of Skills to their Skill pyramid (as they decide they are important). Each level of a Skill above Mediocre costs 1 point and there must always be one more Skill at each lower level than the level above.

The general rule for Aspects and Stunts is not to have more than half as many Aspects as the character has Skills and not more than half as many Stunts as they have Aspects.

CHAPTER THREE

Character Creation

Character Creation

If you want to spend some time creating a more rounded character with your friends, then follow this process.

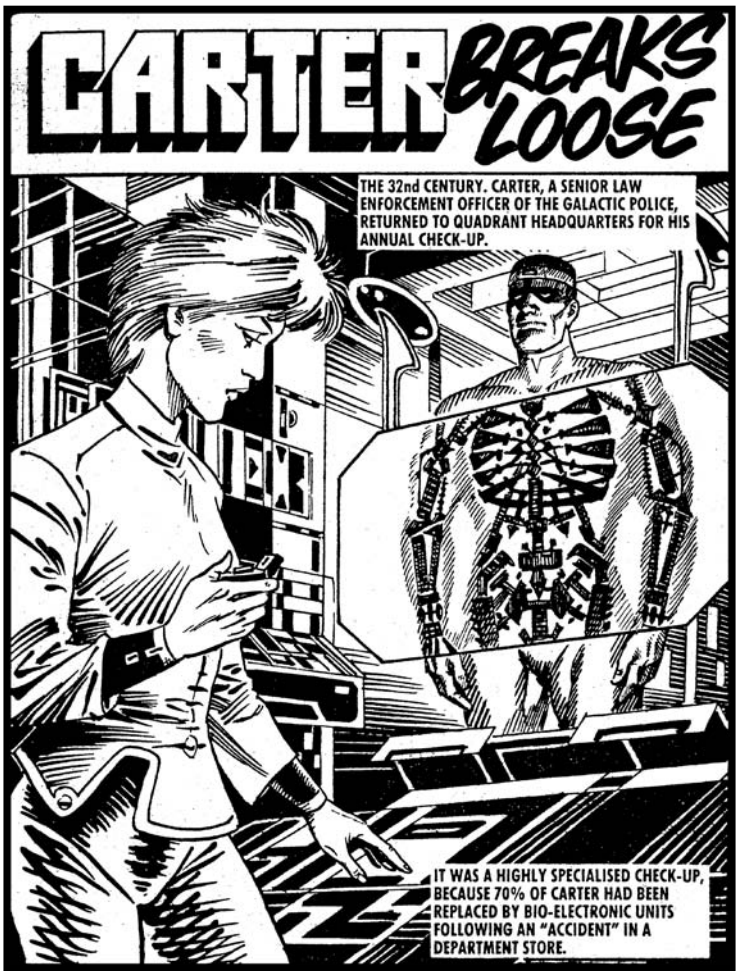
If you'd like to create a character on your own see page 37.

Steps of Character Creation

1. Think about your character concept (see some Character Ideas on page 53).
2. Make up a cool ***Starblazer*** name for your character.
3. Go through the **phases** (see below) in order, picking two Aspects each phase.
4. Assign your Skills.
5. Select five Stunts for your character.

Creating the Character

Full blown character generation takes place over four to five **phases**, but there is also a simpler version where you create your character on the fly (page 28) if you want to dive right in.


CARTER BREAKS LOOSE
THE 32nd CENTURY. CARTER, A SENIOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE GALACTIC POLICE, RETURNED TO QUADRANT HEADQUARTERS FOR HIS ANNUAL CHECK-UP.
IT WAS A HIGHLY SPECIALISED CHECK-UP, BECAUSE 70% OF CARTER HAD BEEN REPLACED BY BIO-ELECTRONIC UNITS FOLLOWING AN "ACCIDENT" IN A DEPARTMENT STORE.

Each phase outlines events in that character's life. The first phase sets up their general background and training. The last four phases consist of the character's adventures in the Starblazer Legends.

Character creation is a group activity, done at the same time, ideally with at least three players (remember, the more players for a *character creation session*, the better!) in addition to the Story Teller. The character creation process includes a number of built-in ways to establish ties and history between the characters and the setting. Character creation can often take the time of a full session of regular play, and is a good opportunity to lay the foundations of the setting, and allow everyone to establish a common understanding of each others' characters.

During character creation, players are encouraged to talk out loud about their characters, make suggestions to each other, discuss how to make their characters work together, talk about relationships and interactions between the characters, and otherwise establish some of the campaign background.

Preparation

Before the first phase, it's a good idea to think about the concept for your character. They could be modeled after a particular hero from the ***Starblazer*** comics, or science fiction/fantasy, or could be based around some specific thing that you want to be able to do, like fly a Starship, blow things up, or solve mysteries. ***Starblazer*** heroes can usually be described briefly, so try to think of a concept that you can express simply. If you can express it with an exclamation point at the end, all the better!

You could also think about your character's upbringing, and early development:

- What were the family's circumstances like? Rich? Poor? Scholarly? Isolated? Pious? Political? Unusual? Dangerous - constantly under attack? Hardy - growing up in an isolated colony? We've provided some funs ways to generate a random upbringing and basic lifepath on page 37.
- How big is the family?
- How well does the character get along with the family?
- What world or nation is the character from? What region? You could use the Random

I WANT SOME ANSWERS AND I WANT THEM NOW . . . OR I'LL LET MY RIOT SQUAD LOOSE AND TURN THIS SPACE STATION INTO AN ORBITING JUNK YARD!
I HEARD A RUMOUR CARTER WAS SEEN IN THE TRADING POST ON NUNKI-DELTA.

Planet Generator in Chapter 26 to work this out or pick a world from Chapter 29.

- How was the character educated?
- What were the character's friends like? Did the character get into much trouble?

Names

Starblazer names can be like any kind of name, but there is usually a particular cadence to them. The most common model is a short first name and a last name which is also a word (usually a noun or adjective, but sometimes a proper noun will be a good fit). This allows for simple, resonant names. Have a look at Chapter 31 for some suggested names or check out *www.starblazeradventures.com* for a list of heroic names from the pages of ***Starblazer***.

More "normal" names are fine too, but such names are more appropriate if your character also has an alias (such as Jubal McKay, The Planet Tamer) or is intentionally cultivating an image!

Starting points

Here are four suggested levels of characters you can start with, which each give a different balance to character abilities.

Characters on the fly

If you really just want to get going then just dive right in, go to the Characters on the fly section on page 28. This is perfect for those players who don't really know what Skills, Stunts or Aspects are important yet and provides the leeway to add them as they discover the game rules.

Gritty Campaign

If you are playing a Gritty campaign you'll have gone through the first three phases and will be starting with 6 Aspects and can now pick 3 Stunts and 15 Skill Points worth of Skills – for example 6 Average, 3 Fair and 1 Good Skills. Gritty is a real low-tech starting point, it's good for more dangerous and hard missions, perhaps with recruits fresh out of the academy or colonists forced on to the frontline.

Standard Campaign

If you are playing a standard campaign you'll have gone through the first four phases and will be starting with 8 Aspects and 4 Stunts. You can now pick twenty points of Skills, such as 4 average, 3 fair, 2 good and 1 great Skills. Standard is a compromise between having enough Skills to make it interesting and plenty of scope for character development.

Heroic Campaign

If you are playing a Heroic campaign you'll have gone through the first five phases and will be starting with 10 Aspects and 5 Stunts. You can now pick thirty-five points of Skills, such as 5 Average, 4 Fair, 3 Good, 2 Great and 1 Superb. The Heroic scale starting point will provide a more standard pyramid shape with more width and a greater aptitude across all Skills – this is for character's who've seen some action, experienced the galaxy and can hit the ground running

Phase One: Training

Phase one is the character's time in the academy, in service, at war with the navy or training in Star Patrol, perhaps defending the farm from off-planet pirates or following your merchant family across the galaxy. As young cadets, trainee agents, plucky farmboys or inquisitive students, this is the time when the characters start coming into their own, and begin realizing their true potential.

Some questions to consider during this period:

- What did your character do? For whom? Where? In what capacity?
- What was the highlight, did anything dangerous happen? Did you meet any of the other characters there?
- What happened to your family? Your patron? Your best friend who you grew up with?

Player Rules

1. Write down a brief summary of the events of the phase. Include the name and fate of your family, patron or best friend.
2. Write down two Aspects that are in some way tied into the events of the phase. You may want to choose a particular Career Aspect, see Chapter 4 for more info. This will give you access to particular Stunts and resources.

Phase Two: Starblazer Legend

Phase two is the character's first Starblazer Legend, starring him or her! Each player needs to come up with a title for the legend starring his character, in a fashion reminiscent of the comics. The general pattern is:

Character Name (vs./in.../and) *Adventurous Thing!*

As such, **Deke Sundriver** and *The Starcurse!* or **Brandon Carter** in... *The Lost Destroyer* would be ideal.

You can look at Chapter 30 for examples of ***Starblazer*** comics with brief summaries of the stories. Players should feel free to use any of these.

Then, each player needs to think up a story to go with his title. The story doesn't need to have a lot of detail – in fact, it should be

no more detailed than the synopsis on the back of a DVD or novel.

Player Rules

1. Write down the title and synopsis (a couple sentences at most) for your character's Starblazer Legend. Don't nail down all of the details of it yet (you'll find out why below).
2. Write down two Aspects that are in some way tied into the events of the legend. (You can delay doing this, wait to see how the next couple of phases play out, and then choose your Aspects at the end). See page 89 for some suggestions of Aspects.

Phase Three: Guest Star

At the beginning of this phase, the Story Teller writes down all the Starblazer Legend titles on separate sheets of paper, shuffles the stack, and hands them out. If a player gets his own Legend, he should trade with the person to his right until everyone has a title that isn't theirs. The title of the Starblazer Legend a player is now holding is a legend that his character had a supporting role in. For each Starblazer Legend, the involved players – the player whose Legend it is, and the player who has just received that Legend on a piece of paper – should discuss the story, and add one or two sentences to the description of the Legend to reflect the supporting character's role.

Player Rules

1. Add a sentence or two to the description of the Starblazer Legend you're co-starring in.
2. Write down two Aspects that are in some way tied into the events of the legend (as before, you can delay doing this).
3. If you are playing a Gritty level game stop here

Phase Four: Guest Star

Phase four is identical to phase three, with the sole caveat that no character can costar in the same Legend twice.

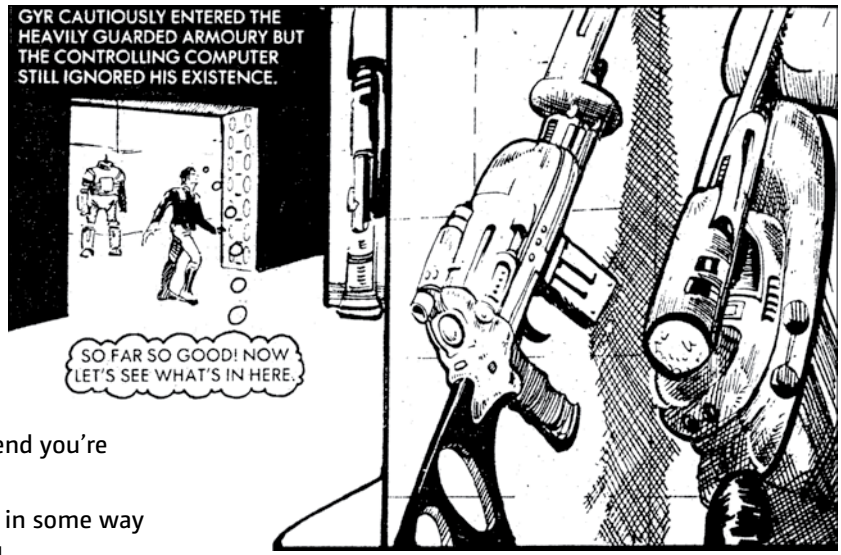
Player Rules

1. Add a sentence or two to the description of the Starblazer Legend you're supporting cast in.
2. Write down two Aspects that are in some way tied into the events of the legend.
3. If you are playing a Standard level campaign stop here.

B

Phase Five: Guest Star

If you are playing a Heroic level campaign, go through the process for a third time (if you have enough players), or simply choose another Starblazer Legend that all the players agree on and discuss your roles in the story.


GYR CAUTIOUSLY ENTERED THE HEAVILY GUARDED ARMOURY BUT THE CONTROLLING COMPUTER STILL IGNORED HIS EXISTENCE.
SO FAR SO GOOD! NOW LET'S SEE WHAT'S IN HERE.

Player Rules

1. Add a sentence or two to the description of the Starblazer Legend you're supporting cast in.
2. Write down two Aspects that are in some way tied into the events of the legend.

Adding Characters Later

Players who join after the initial character creation session should ask for volunteers to be in their Starblazer Legends (volunteers do not get additional Aspects, however). They should also pick two Legends that sound interesting to co-star in.

Skills

Once all players have mapped out their phases and chosen their Aspects, it's time to pick Skills. Each player gets to choose Skills as suggested below. Any Skill the character does not explicitly take defaults to Mediocre. Because of the "shape" of this set of Skills, this is sometimes referred to as the character's **Skill Pyramid**. For a quick view of available skills, see the list on page 35.

Cost	Skill Rating
0	Mediocre
1	Average
2	Fair
3	Good
4	Great
5	Superb

Here are some example pyramids based on point totals for each Skill, using the standard Skill Point starting value of 20. Remember you must have at least one more Skill than the level above .

1 Great, 2 Good, 3 Fair, 4 Average

2 Good, 4 Fair, 6 Average

1 Good, 5 Fair, 7 Average

Stunts

Each player selects the appropriate number of Stunts for his character. These are likely to be Stunts that are associated with the character's most highly-ranked Skills, but there is no restriction in that regard. They may also be Stunts unlocked by choosing certain Career Aspects on page 42. In a number of cases, it may be fine to take a Stunt that's tied to a Skill that the player has left at the default, if the Story Teller agrees to it.

For more on Stunts and how they can affect the game, see Chapter 8.

Equipment During Character Creation

Once you have picked your Aspects, Skills and Stunts, look at each and write down one piece of standard equipment that is relevant. You can pick these from the equipment list in Chapter 5. For example a character with the Aspect of 'Dashing Naval Officer' would probably always have his uniform or maybe a ship sword, whilst another with the Skill Science could have a diagnostic tool. It's something that person would normally carry around with them all the time.

In ***Starblazer***, characters are expected to have access to all 'Mediocre' cost pieces of equipment (see page 58). This means they are free to those who would normally have access to them. If something is rated as Average, Fair, Good or higher it's more expensive, rare, illegal or requires permission to own and requires a Skill check.

You'll need to ask the Story Teller if you can take this, and if he or she agrees you'll need to make a roll against your Resources Skill. If you don't have this Skill, treat it as Mediocre – or basically 0. To own the

piece of equipment or item, roll the dice, add your Resources Skill bonus and you're looking for a result of at least that shown next to the item. For example the ancient Demon Sword requires a Legendary or +8 result to own. Be careful though, if you fail at a roll, you cannot make Resource rolls for any other equipment during character creation and if you get a minus result that is deducted from your next Resources Skill check. Note that you cannot use Fate points or Stunts to influence the Resource Skill check at this stage.

The idea is to choose particular pieces of equipment or stuff to give you things to hang your story and action around. Having some equipment doesn't always give you any bonuses; however it might trigger an idea in your head. 'Ah! I'm going to spend a Fate point and say that if I reverse the polarity on the diagnostic tool's transceiver I could broadcast a beam at the robot so it's momentarily blind to us".

The Last Bit: Stress & Fate points

Characters can take up to 5 Health stress and 5 Composure stress, and may start with more due to the benefits of certain Stunts. Check off any physical and composure stress boxes you don't have.

You start the game (and each subsequent session) with a number of Fate points equal to ten, less the number of Stunts you have.

Skill List

Alertness ('passive' awareness, on-your-toes-ness, the ability to avoid surprise)
Art (playing to an audience, artistic composition and appreciation, creative communication)
Athletics (running, jumping, climbing, dodging)
Burglary (the ability to break into places you shouldn't be, and to plan to break into them)
Contacts (knowing people, tapping into the rumour mill, keeping your ear to the ground, hitting the streets or the data web to get the word out)
Deceit (falsehood, deception, distraction, misdirection)
Discipline (concentration and self-control)
Driving (driving, flying, boating, car chases, shortcuts, street navigation)
Empathy ("reading" people, maintaining the social graces, spotting lies)
Endurance (stamina and toughness)
Engineering (building, fixing, and breaking things with tools)
Fists (brawling, martial arts)
Guns (gunplay, firefights, gun knowledge, etc)
Intimidation (threats, scaring people, provoking anger, interrogation)
Investigation (examination, eavesdropping, pattern recognition, surveillance)
Leadership (charisma, leadership skills, reputation, social "teflon factor")
Might (lifting things, breaking things, exerting force, wrestling)
Mysteries (ancient mysteries, magic and special powers, rituals, and vague I've-got-a-bad-feeling-about-this "sixth sense")
Rapport (small-talk, friendliness, 'putting your best foot forward' impression-making, gift of gab)
Resolve (courage and willpower, coolness under fire and self drive)
Resources (wealth, equipment, lifestyle, accommodations)
Scholarship (mundane research, sciences, languages, using computers)
Starship Engineering (FTL & Manoeuvring Drive, power and repairs)
Starship Piloting (FTL navigation, galactic travel, space hazards, zero g combat manoeuvring)
Starship Systems (all on-board systems from communications to shields, engineering, life support, and specialised equipment)
Starship Gunnery (plasma, energy, projectile and unusual weapon systems)
Stealth (hiding, skulking, ambushing, "shadowing" or secretly following someone)
Survival (animal handling, outdoor camouflage, riding, wilderness scavenging, tracking beasts)
Weapons (armed combat, swordplay, thrown weaponry, weapon knowledge)

GET THEM!
THANK YOU, THERISH. BUT THE FAT'S REALLY IN THE FIRE NOW.
QUITE SO SIR. A DELICATE SITUATION INDEED. MAY I SUGGEST A SHOW OF STRENGTH—PERHAPS THE SONIC SABRE?

Advice on Character Creation

Motivation

It's important to work out why your character does what he does. ***Starblazer*** characters are exceptional, and they could very easily find success in less exciting fields than 'adventuring'. So it is on your head to figure out *why* your character is going to keep getting involved in these things. It is work, a sense of duty, for revenge, to see new things, for love? Along with the Starblazer Legends you chose, this will give the Story Teller more clues as to what you might like to see in the game.

Choosing Aspects

Aspects can be both useful and dangerous, but they should never be boring. Whenever you choose an Aspect, stop a minute to think about what kinds of situations you can imagine using it for, and what kind of trouble it might get you into. The very best Aspects suggest answers to both those questions, and an Aspect that can answer neither is likely to be very dull indeed.

When you're picking Aspects, one of the best ways to determine that you and the Story Teller are on the same page is to discuss three situations where you feel the Aspect would be a help or a hindrance so you both have a clear idea of what it might be used for.

Career Aspects

These are special Aspects that unlock special Stunts. You should add your own description to a Career Aspect. We've provided examples but feel free to develop your own. Career Aspects also bring with them certain responsibilities, resources and threats. See Chapter 4 for more details.

Powerful Aspects

At first glance, the most powerful Aspects would seem to be things that are broadly useful with no real downside, things like "Quick", "Lucky" or "Strong", and a lot of players are tempted to go with those. **Resist that temptation!**

There are three very large problems with Aspects like this: they're boring, they don't generate Fate points, and they surrender your ability to help shape the story.

Boring is a pretty obvious problem. Consider a character who is "Lucky" and one who has "Strange Luck". The latter Aspect can be used for just as many good things as the former, but it also allows for a much wider range of possibilities.

You'll also want to have some room for negative results of Aspects. This may seem counterintuitive at first, but remember that every time an Aspect makes trouble for you, you'll receive a Fate point, which is a pretty powerful incentive.

To come back to "Strange Luck", it means that the Story Teller can throw bizarre, even unfortunate, coincidences at the character, but **you get paid for it.** If this doesn't seem tempting enough yet, remember that the Story Teller is probably going to do something bizarre to you anyway – shouldn't you benefit from it, and have some say in how it happens?

And that leads to the last point. When the Story Teller sits down to plan an adventure, she's going to look over the Aspects of the players involved. If one character has the Aspect "Quick" and another has the Aspect "Sworn Enemy of the Starfuries", which one do you think suggests more ideas for the Story Teller?

Your Aspects give you a vote in what sort of game you're going to be playing in, so don't let it go to waste. If nothing else, you have just established that the Secret Brotherhood of the Starfuries exists in the setting, and the Story Teller will probably turn to you for the details.

So in the end, the most powerful Aspects are easy to spot, because they're the most *interesting* ones. If you consider that you want an Aspect you can use to your advantage but which can also be used to generate Fate points, then it's clear you will get the most mechanical potency out of an Aspect that can do both. What's more, Aspects that tie into the world somehow (such as to a group, or a person) help you fill in the cast and characters of the world in a way that is most appealing to you.

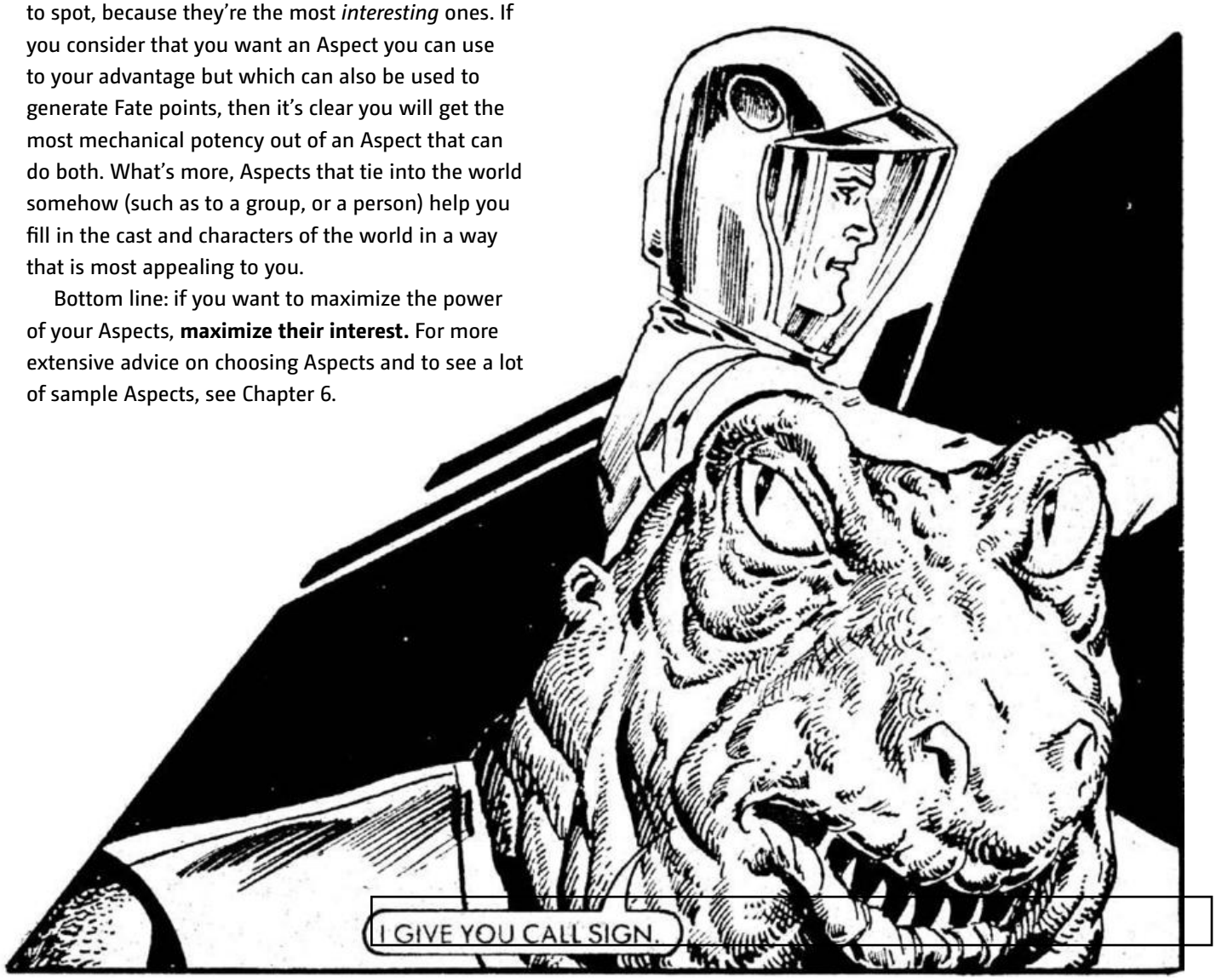
Bottom line: if you want to maximize the power of your Aspects, **maximize their interest.** For more extensive advice on choosing Aspects and to see a lot of sample Aspects, see Chapter 6.

Random Character Lifepaths

If you're thinking: "What happens when I want to create a character for ***Starblazer*** on my own?" this is the section for you. It's not always convenient to spend time developing characters together so this system can help you come up with your own character, ready to dive in to the game. You can still use the suggestions below for mutual character development as well.

Here's what to do:

1. Roll for starting background; Upbringing location and quality of life
2. Roll for background twist
3. Pick a number of Starblazer Legends depending on the type of character you want (gritty, standard or heroic)
4. Picks Aspects you feel relate to those legends and your background
5. Pick Skills
6. Pick Stunts



Starting Background

First roll to see where you were brought up.

Roll	Random Upbringing - Location
-5/-4	Child of a farmer in an outlying colony world
-3	Nobility
-2	Space Station
-1	A small town
±0	A major capital
+1	A small village
+2	Scientific community
+3	Religious order
+4/+5	Travelling merchant family

Next roll to see what kind of quality of life you have.

Roll	Starting Background
-5/-4	Destitute
-3	First class citizen
-2	Third class citizen
-1	Second class citizen
±0	Second class citizen
+1	Second class citizen
+2	Colonist
+3	First class citizen
+4/+5	Devolved/New world

We've graded people in five categories.

LEVEL 4 – Lowest class of citizen

Destitute – You live off what you can find. Maybe you live in the ancient slums below vast cities. You take what you can get and you've done a few bad things to survive, but it was you or them. You will take any chance you can get. Civilisation has forgotten you exist, but maybe if enough of you got together, you could make them take notice.

Devolved world / New world – You're the descendant of those who survived the war, or maybe your world was cut off from civilisation for too long and technology was lost. What little there is belongs to those in control. Maybe you're from a world that's just been discovered, and technology is like magic to you. You're hungry for knowledge and to discover this vast civilisation and meet the many different people out there

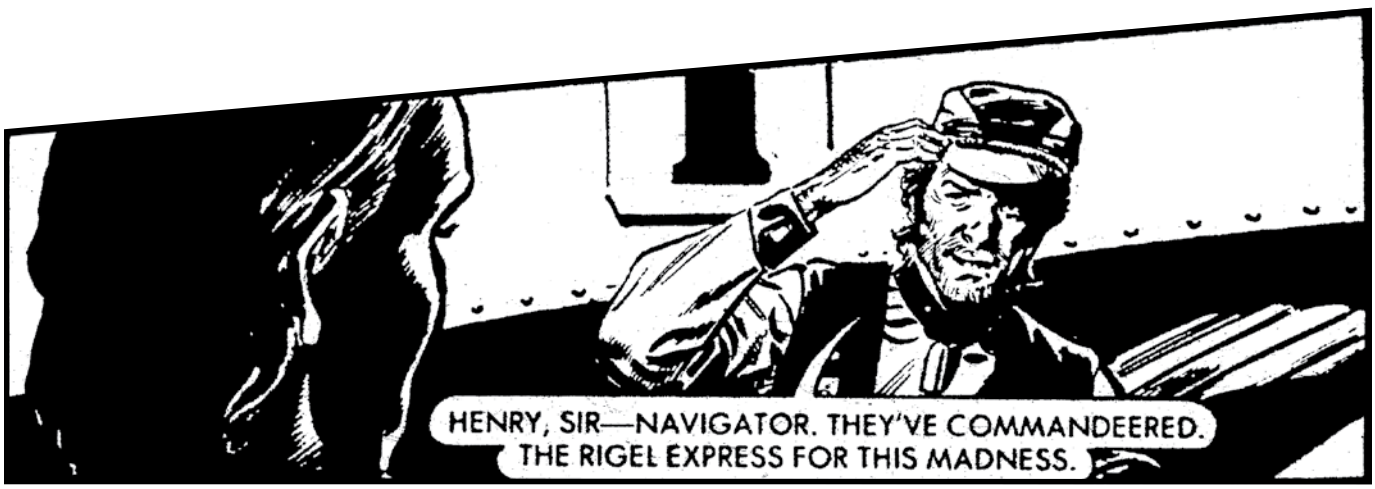
LEVEL 3

Colonist – You're got a good thing going, a nice piece of land, a great community. You haven't got much but it's a good life. Family and friends are important and you'll always yearn for your home, whichever star you look up to. Civilisation and government seems a long way away, and sometimes that's a good thing, unless of course you need them to protect you from pirates or alien invasion!

Third class citizen – No one cares who you are, you're a number, a name on a list of billions. Maybe you want to be someone, or maybe you're happy being invisible, doing your thing. Work is hard and you get little time to relax. You might hate those above you or be happy they haven't noticed you yet.

LEVEL 2

Second class citizen – You're doing okay, got a nice little place, earning a bit of cash. Work is hard or dull



but okay and you get to play a bit. Maybe you still want more, and you've probably got the contacts to give you a chance at getting what ever it is you want. You might not want to risk losing what you've got, considering the billions who have to scratch a living below you.

LEVEL 1

First class citizen – You're at the top of the pile. You work in the most important companies and organisations. You have an amazing quality of life and can work where you wish. You have great connections and yet maybe you're still not happy. What's missing? Maybe life's too easy and you need to see what else is out there. You could be scared of losing all of this, it's a privileged position and you might do 'anything' to keep it so.

LEVEL 0

Ruling Class – You're the elite of society. You run a mega-corporation or one of the most important organisations in your society or perhaps are part of the inner circle of government. Your influence is felt on hundreds of worlds and there is no one you cannot reach. This much power has an effect on people and you may have learnt how to deal with this, or perhaps abused your position.

Background Twists

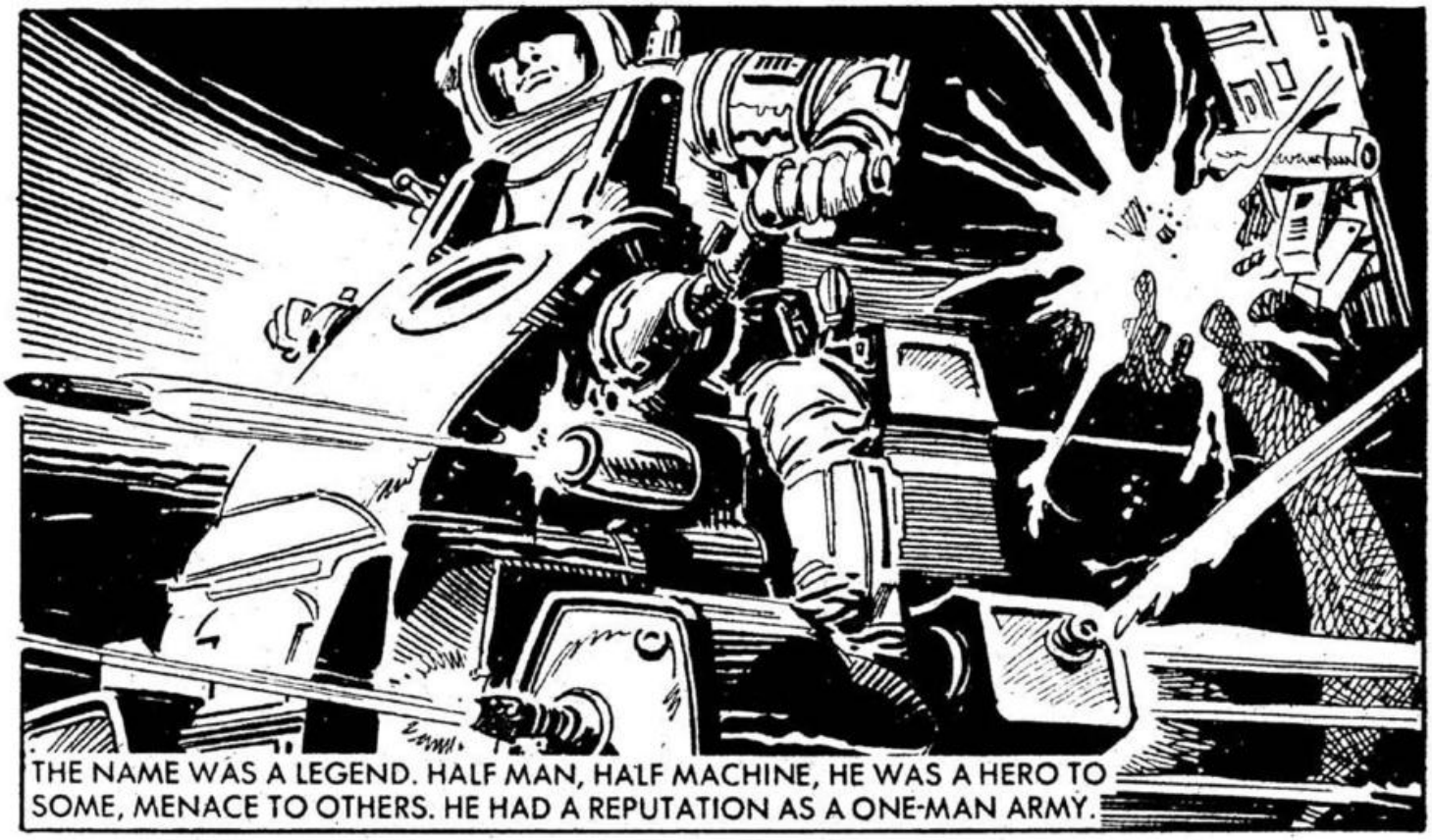
Roll on this table to see if you have a background twists. This means you stand out in some way within your background level. You would be noticed by people in the background level above you.

Roll	Background Twist
-5/-4	Anti-Hero
-3	Failure
-2	Criminal record
-1	Nothing unusual
±0	Nothing unusual
+1	Nothing unusual
+2	Notable/Leader
+3	Star
+4/+5	Hero

Hero – you saved an important person's life from the level above you, or achieved fame in a war or the security services. People will know of you, the media will be interested in what you do and you'll find it easier to get people to support you in your endeavours.

Star – You're a media star, actor, singer, news reporter or creator. People love you and maybe the performance is a drug you cannot get enough of. Your persona off camera could be completely different and sometimes you hate the fact everyone assumes they know you. The news always follows you, unless you are the news in which case you desperately need to find the next big scoop to keep your producer happy.

Notable/Leader – You've achieved something important in the community, maybe you're a renowned inventor who's created something



amazing or you've brought together resources in your community to make people's lives better. You might have led an army or navy unit, you run your own company, or organisation, or are a renowned politician or leader.

Criminal Record – You screwed up and made a bad decision, followed the wrong people or just got greedy. You got caught or are still on the run, nothing major but bad enough to make you want to keep a low profile.

Failure – You failed big time. Your business went down taking everything with it or you lost everyone you love in a crash that was your fault. Perhaps you made a bad decision that cost the guys in your unit their lives. You've lost people, your life, maybe your soul. Whilst you are technically still in this background level, you actual life resembles that of the level below as you struggle to deal with your inner demons and the practical fall-out of your mistakes.

Anti-hero – You might have done something very bad, you're a traitor, pirate or major criminal? Perhaps you were fed up with the system and rebelled, maybe convincing a few others to follow you. Or did the greed get to you this time? What ever it is, 'they' want you badly, so watch out! You might even have your own secret organisation.

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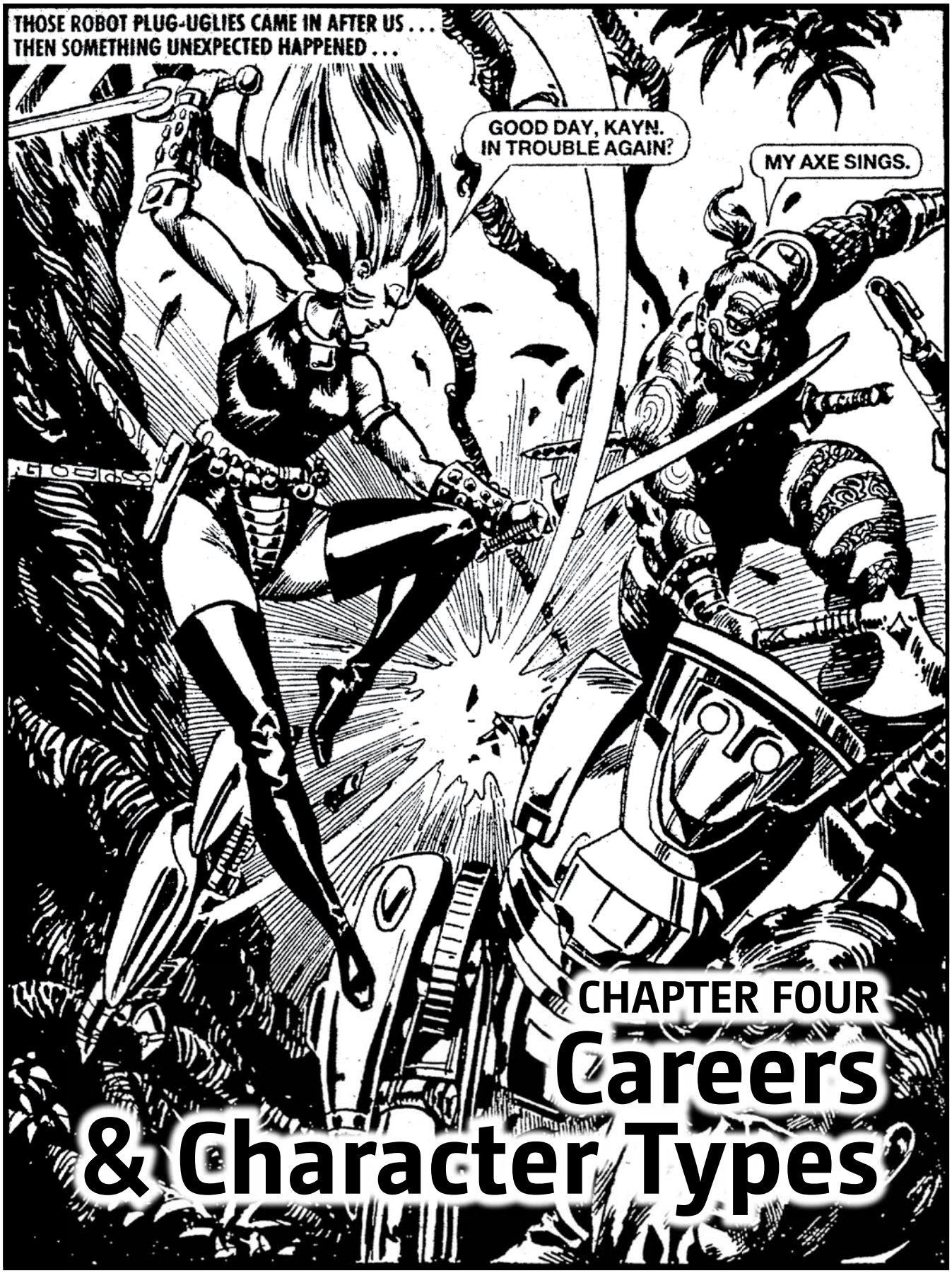


CHAPTER FOUR
Careers & Character Types

Careers and Character Types

You may have your character follow a particular career. This gives advantages in the form of additional abilities and a concrete sense of the character's role or purpose. If you want to charge straight into the game, you don't have to choose a career, but we would recommend it.

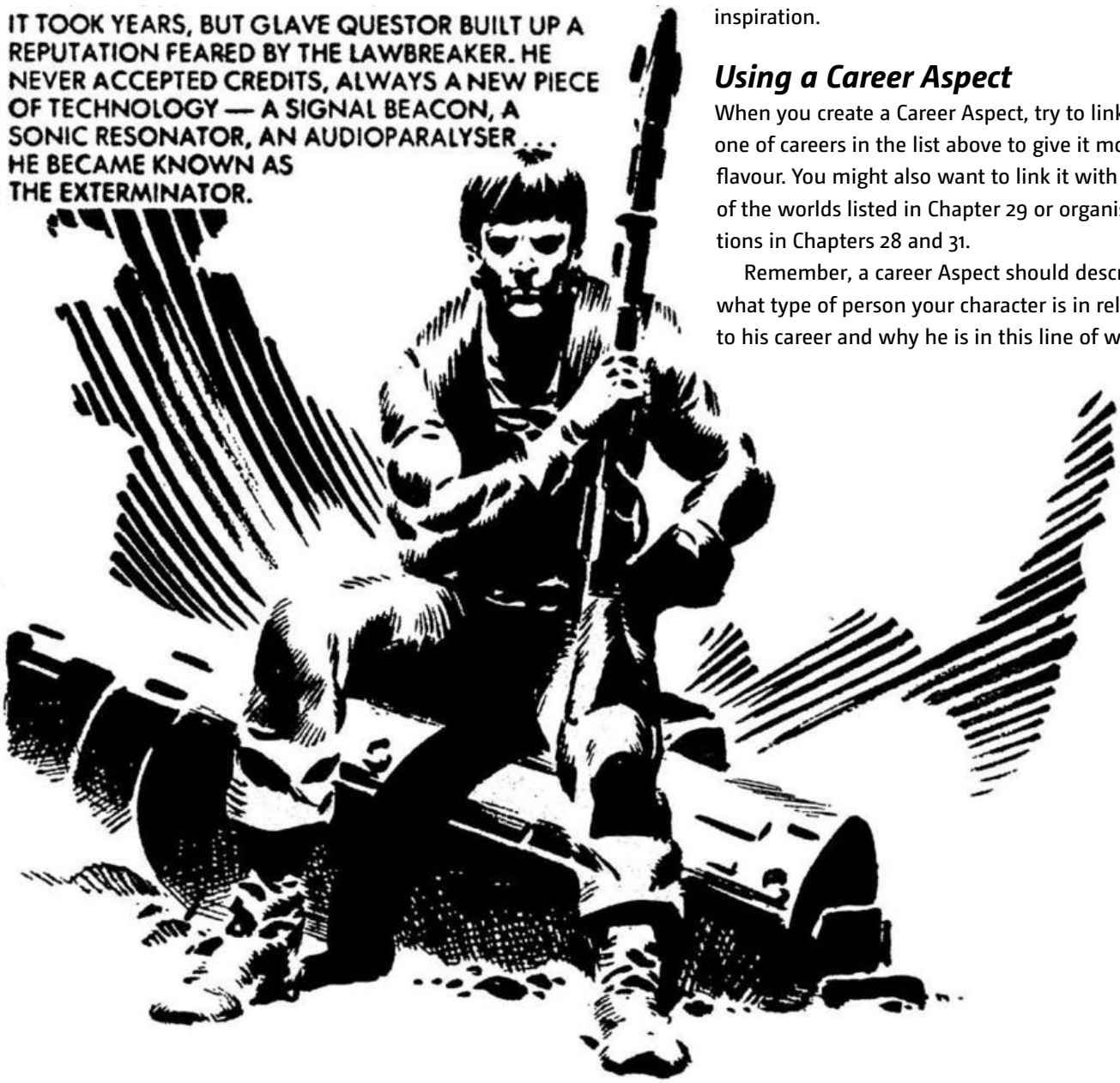
Choosing a Career

You should start defining your character's career by choosing a general career type from the following list:

- Civilian (Traveller, News Reporter)
- Diplomat
- Miner/Scavenger
- Merchant
- Explorer (Scout Corps, Archaeologist)
- Sci-Techs (Fi-Sci, Engineer, Scientist)
- Security (Star Patrol, Law Lords, Galac Squad, Bounty Hunters, etc)
- Military (Navy, Army, Mercenaries, Suicide Squad)
- Pirate/Rebel
- Native (Warlord, Prince)

Don't worry if you can't see an exact match for what you had in mind – just pick the closest. The next step is to personalise your character's career by developing your choice into a Career Aspect.

See the Starblazer Legends chapter (page 495) for more information on the organisations mentioned, and check out the character ideas on page 53 in this chapter for some general background inspiration.


IT TOOK YEARS, BUT GLAVE QUESTOR BUILT UP A REPUTATION FEARED BY THE LAWBREAKER. HE NEVER ACCEPTED CREDITS, ALWAYS A NEW PIECE OF TECHNOLOGY — A SIGNAL BEACON, A SONIC RESONATOR, AN AUDIOPARALYSER... HE BECAME KNOWN AS THE EXTERMINATOR.

Using a Career Aspect

When you create a Career Aspect, try to link it to one of careers in the list above to give it more flavour. You might also want to link it with one of the worlds listed in Chapter 29 or organisations in Chapters 28 and 31.

Remember, a career Aspect should describe what type of person your character is in relation to his career and why he is in this line of work.

For example:

- 'Signed up to the Federation Navy to forget her'
- 'Star Patrol cost me my marriage'
- 'I may be a Lawlord, but I'll hunt them down and make them pay'
- 'I just want to explore one more alien world'
- 'Gritty veteran of the Thermal Wars'
- 'Idealistic Fi-Sci scientist'
- 'Brave Star Patrol Officer'
- 'This deal will mean peace for our worlds'
- 'Consul of the Earth Empire'
- 'Ambassador expelled from the Centaurian government'
- 'A good diplomat always has a second plan. And a third, for that matter'

It could also indicate how experienced you are, such as 'Brave Star Patrol recruit' as opposed to 'Dashing Star Patrol officer'.

Each career details a few Stunts that you can choose from in addition to the normal Stunts for Skills.

The Story Teller is free to create new careers or Stunts to go with the career options detailed below.

Civilian

(Civilian, News Reporter, Galactic Back-Packer)

Maybe you're a galactic traveller or back-packer and want to see the fabulous wonders of the universe, alien worlds and their cultures. You've taken time out from your career to travel as far and wide as you can with just a few essentials and hope to bring back some great memories.

You could be a News Reporter who needs one more exclusive. You've got an eye for the personal angle, your camera is always ready, and you've got some expenses to get you where the news is happening, be it a backwater world or a galactic megalopolis.

✧ Ticket to Travel

You've got a universal travel pass, which gives you third class travel (cattle class) on all civilian liners to any destination. You'll have a little money set aside for the odd trip to worlds off the beaten track (or you'll work as crew to get there). You may add +1 to Resource rolls to secure passage to out-of-the-way places.

✧ Travel in Style

Requires Ticket to Travel

You just *have* to travel in style, and that means first class apartments on the best liners travelling between the hottest destinations. You have a First Class travel pass that gives you the best quality quarters on any passenger ship.

✧ Funds

Requires Travel in Style

Your career has paid dividends and you've got quite bit saved. Once per game session, you may add +2 on a Resource roll.

✧ Small Ship

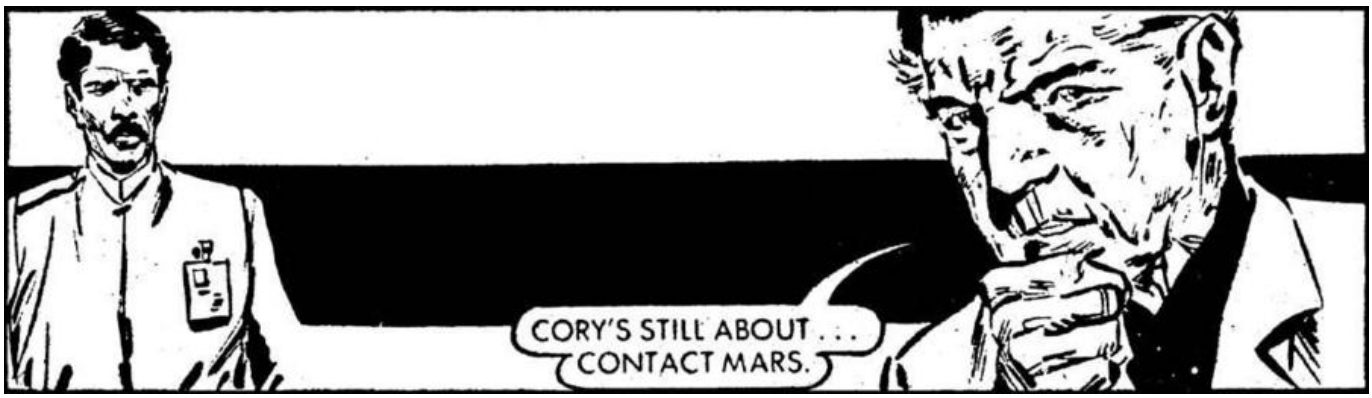
Requires Travel in Style

Forget travelling on liners, you're doing it at your own pace. Sometimes the best locations are off the beaten track. The character has the equivalent of a small one-person scout ship. It might be small but it gets you where you want to go, when you want to go there.

✧ Expenses

News Reporter only. Requires Ticket to Travel

You've got an expense account with one of the major banks servicing the areas you'll visit. You can sharge meals, drinks, hotels, or a bit of cash here and there within reason, but spend too much and it's just as likely to get pulled if you're not sending some juicy stories back in return. You get +1 to one Resource roll in each game session.



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WE CAN'T GO TO ROANAK TO INVESTIGATE THE CRASH OURSELVES—IT'S STRICTLY OFF LIMITS. WE'LL HAVE TO CALL IN A SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR . . .

Diplomat

Some people fight and some people talk. You are the emissary of a country, planet, star system or star-spanning empire. The diplomat is the first line of defence and the best way to know what your closest ally, enemy or friend is up to. You'd be amazed what can be decided over a few whispered words or a heroic speech in front of the assembled government. An expert diplomat is worth a thousand armed ships. Knowledge of those around you is vital and a certain skill in socialising and networking is a must. As a diplomat you automatically gain diplomatic immunity, which means that your luggage is not searched, and you are immune to local laws (but abuse this and you will be swiftly sent home).

The player can pick from the various governments listed in the Starblazer Legends chapter or create a government as an organisation with the Story Teller's help, using the rules in Chapter 16.

✧ Protocol

You are expert in dealing with all manner of guests, especially with the many clashing galactic cultures. You can use Contacting as a knowledge type Skill to ascertain the right way to interact with species and representatives of other governments, and to discover nuances and unusual background information that could be useful in negotiations.

✧ Introduction

You know a lot of people, and who you don't know, you can get to. You are able to get an introduction to anyone in government or high positions by making a successful Rapport Skill check with the difficulty being the level or importance of the target.

✧ Favour

Requires Introduction

The character knows a lot of people, and have pulled a few strings to help them on their way up the ladder. There are three people in high positions or with access to considerable resources that you can ask a favour of, but once those favours are used up they're gone.

✧ Direct Line

Requires Favour

You have a direct line to the head of the government or organization you serve and may make a direct request for support using your Rapport Skill versus a difficulty based on what you are requesting. Asking for financial support for a government event should be simple compared to asking for a naval fleet to secretly attack another empire's base.

This can take the form of you directing one of the organisation's Skills for an action or a simple favour. You can also request a personal audience. If the circumstances do not justify it, the head of state will be less likely to accept the request next time (-2 modifier to Rapport Skill check). If it was justified you receive a +2 bonus to the next request.

✧ Embassy Funds

Requires Direct Line

You have access to lots of money in matters that are vital to your government. Once per game session you can assume you rolled +4 on the dice for a Resource roll. However, if this is abused the facility will be withdrawn and you will likely be questioned by your government. At best, you will lose your position, at worst you'll end up in jail!

✧ Embassy

Requires Embassy Funds

You have a plush embassy – land-based, inside a large space station or possibly a ship of Scale (4)-Scale (6) depending on the size of the government. This comes with personnel, security, suites for entertaining guests and encrypted communications to your government. You may be asked from time to time to make the facilities available to members of your government, security or intelligence agencies and, of course, an Embassy comes with a whole host of political problems: people seeking asylum, missing credentials, visas and much more!

Explorer

(Scout Corps, Archaeologist, Xenobiologist)

You're looking for signs of life, ancient ruins, habitable worlds, alien races or lost colonies. As an archaeologist you're interested in the remains of civilisations, whilst a scout wants to find those who could be allies, or even enemies. A Xenobiologist revels in the discovery of new species and alien civilisations.

✧ Maps

You have a number of maps showing the possible locations of interesting places and potential hazards. Some of the maps might be false. Only by travelling there will you discover the truth.

✧ Scout Corps Gear

The character has +1 on Resource Skill checks once per game session.

✧ Interesting Location

Requires Maps

The character knows the location of an interesting place – it could be an undiscovered ancient ruin, a world emanating unusual signals, a Star Relic, mysterious derelict Starship, etc. They just haven't been able to secure the funds or support to go and check it out properly yet.

You could give up in the hope of a massive favour or payout if it proves worthwhile. Otherwise you could get someone to back you for a cut of the profits. If the player gives the co-ordinates of their secret away they make a Skill check with their Resources Skill against the difficulty that they wish the find to be worth. If they succeed they receive the value of the find as a Resource Skill bonus, which can be used as a whole or split up over several Resource Skill checks.

If you fail the Resource Skill check the mission ended badly – it could be there was nothing there, crew members were lost or the whole expedition disappeared and no doubt the backers will want to ask you some questions. The severity of the failure should be an indication of how badly it went, and how much trouble you're now in!

If you choose to pursue the mission, it should be an adventure in its own right with a much bigger reward.

✧ Scout Ship

Requires Interesting Location and Scout Corps Gear

The character has a small one-person Scout ship.

Merchant

You travel from one world to the next doing deals. Everything has a value, to someone. It might be worthless on one world and prized on the next. You pride yourself in knowing who needs what, and that means travelling to every world you can find and seeing what they need.

✧ Ticket to Travel

You've invested in a universal travel pass, which gives you third class travel (cattle class) on all civilian liners to any destination. You've got a little money set aside for the odd trip to worlds off the beaten track so you can check out their goods. Merchants may add a plus one to Resource rolls to secure passage to out-of-the-way places.

✧ Merchant Funds

Requires Ticket to Travel

You've got the funds to buy a container's worth of goods and ship them to one other world. You will need to make a Rapport Skill check against the Resolve of a local merchant or supplier to find something of value to the merchant on a world you know. The success in shifts in this 'purchasing' Skill check is the value of the goods to the destination world. If it's a failure the character didn't find anything of value today. If successful, you pay for the goods to be shipped to the destination, along with yourself.

Once on that world, the character needs to make a Rapport Skill check against a local merchant's Resolve Skill. The shifts achieved on the 'purchasing' Skill check count as a bonus to this 'selling' Skill check. If the roll is successful the total shifts achieved can be broken up and used as a bonus on more Resources Skill checks (by you or by another member of the player group you've given the bonus), or added to the next merchant Rapport Skill check. If the character fails the 'selling' Rapport Skill check at the destination they have not managed to find a buyer that day and must wait for the next day to try again. If the character fails three times in a row, they cannot find a buyer on this world and have to sell the goods at cost, meaning they have gained nothing.

✧ Small Ship

Requires Merchant Funds

Forget travelling on liners, you're doing it your own way. It might be small but it gets you where you want to go, when you want to go there. The character has the equivalent of a small freighter, which is basically a one-man ship with space to carry a small amount of goods.

Military

(Navy, Army, Mercenary)

Your weapons and your unit are the things you know best. When all else fails, you are all that stands between the long night and the light of civilisation. You'll go wherever command sends you and fight to protect even insignificant chunks of rock, if that is what is called for. You'll do your duty and never question the orders. Mercenaries will weigh the cost though—it's only worth what you're getting paid, and sometimes even you have a limit—unless yourhonour demands more.

✧ Supply Officer

The character has access to a military supply officer who can procure equipment. Receive +1 on a Resource Skill check once per game session

✧ Access to Weapons

Requires Supply Officer

At character creation, or whenever this Stunt is acquired, the character may choose weapons, armour or energy shields with a total bonus of +2 regardless of cost. Thereafter the character receives a +1 bonus once per game session on one Resource Skill check to acquire weapons, armour or energy shields. If the roll fails, they may not try again until the beginning of another adventure or 1 month has passed in game time.

✧ Access to Restricted Equipment

Requires Access to Weapons

Instead of the choice of weapons and armour in Access to Weapons the character may choose weapons and/or armour or energy shields with a total bonus of +4 regardless of cost. Thereafter the player is allowed to make Resource Skill rolls to acquire any weapon with a bonus of +4 or higher, armour or energy shields with a bonus of -3. If the roll fails, they may not try again until the beginning of the next adventure or until 1 month has passed in game time.

✧ Officer

Requires Access to Restricted Equipment

You have a ship's crew or unit of soldiers loyal to you who may be on standby or in-transit. You can, in extraordinary circumstances make use of this unit or ship for you own purpose, or may even be assigned them for a particular mission. In return, you also have a responsibility to this unit and may be called on to undertake missions at the most inconvenient times. The unit should be created using the rules in the Organisations chapter or can be part of an organisation and therefore will have the Skill level of the organisation's relevant Arms Skill.

✧ Support

Requires Officer

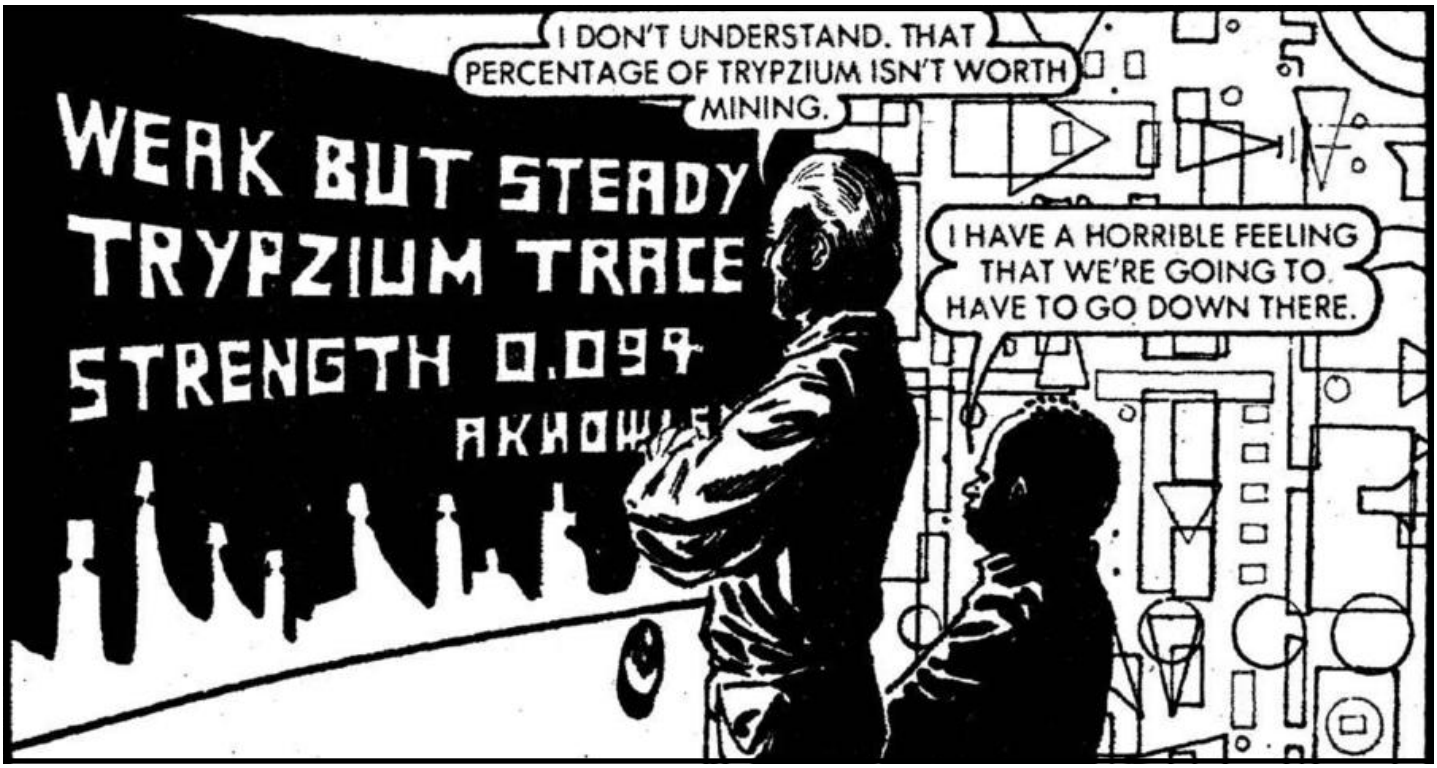
You can call on fire support from an orbital ship or ground support from a nearby unit if required. You can also request a pick-up and transport to a nearby star system in extraordinary circumstances. Fire support will be in the form of a beam weapon or projectile weapon attack from a Frigate in orbit. See the chapter on Starship Combat for more information on the attack or simply use a Great +4 attack on all targets in the zone targeted, with a +4 stress bonus to any successful hits. If you make a Leadership Skill check, the number of shifts generated against a difficulty of Average (+1) is the number of orbital attacks he can direct during this game session. If you fail, no bombardment takes place and you may not make another request this game session.

If no ships are in orbit but land forces are present, you can call on ground support. You gain a squad of soldiers with all relevant Skills at Average +1 (or with Skill levels based on an organisation you have created) or an attack by Scale 3 artillery at Good +3 versus all targets in the zone with a +3 bonus to physical stress damage to any successful hits.

✧ Heavy Weapons Officer

Requires Guns Skill and Access to Restricted Equipment

The character has received training in using heavy weapons and receives a +1 bonus when using them in combat. Heavy weapons cover anything with a Stress bonus of +5 or higher including the dangerous energy swords.


I DON'T UNDERSTAND. THAT PERCENTAGE OF TRYPZIUM ISN'T WORTH MINING.
WEAK BUT STEADY TRYPZIUM TRACE STRENGTH 0.099
I HAVE A HORRIBLE FEELING THAT WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GO DOWN THERE.

✧ Sniper

Requires Guns Skill and Access to Restricted Equipment
You are an elite sniper and receive a +2 bonus when using a sniper rifle or energy rifle, and have had a chance to prepare a hidden position from which to fire without distraction or threat of enemy fire (otherwise the bonus is simply plus one).

✧ Covering Fire!

If you are part of a unit and they are present, you may pay a Fate point to tag the Gun Skills of up to 3 other members of the squad to provide bonuses to three combat manoeuvres. The bonuses apply to the Gun Skills of each member of the squad, who may not take any other action whilst providing the Covering Fire. Each manoeuvre must happen in sequence.

Miner/Scavenger

You're on to a big score – you know it! It could be a vein of the most valuable mineral in the galaxy or perhaps you know the location of an ancient star battle rich with technology and parts to claim.

✧ Maps

You have a number of maps showing the possible locations of minerals or derelicts. Some or all of them may be false. Only by travelling there will you discover the truth.

✧ Mining & Salvage Equipment

You have access to non-military explosives, shipboard mining or salvage equipment. You can add +1 to a Resources roll when checking to acquire these types of equipment once per game session.

✧ Mining or Salvage Kit

Requires Maps
You've got the kit, you just need a ship. You can add an Average Mining Equipment or Salvage System Skill to a Starship at Average (+1) and the ability to tow or strap an Average (+1) quality of resources to the ship (all Starship actions are at a -2 modifier whilst carrying goods in this way).

✧ One Last Score

Requires Mining & Salvage Kit
You've got the co-ordinates to a great score, but you haven't got the money to mine or retrieve it. You could give it up for a massive favour or payout. Otherwise you could get someone to back you for a cut of the profits. If you give the co-ordinates of your find away they can call on a major favour from a First class citizen. For example, you could ask for the loan of a ship for a short period of time, a large sum of money or for the authorities to forget you committed a small crime. If you choose to pursue the claim it should be an adventure in its own right with a big reward.

Native

(Warlord, Prince)

Being from a world that is backward or newly discovered can be a good thing. You have no pre-conceptions about the universe and the people you meet. Everything is new and exciting but you might also be wary of falling foul of strange laws and customs. You might be looking for recognition for your people or for help to solve a strange problem or simply to ensure your home is left alone by those who might take it from you. You might use force of arms, your noble birth or an innate sense of right and wrong to guide you through the strange galaxy before you.

✧ For Justice!

Uttering the names of your ancestors, you rush in to battle, inspiring all those around you. Pay a Fate point and everyone in your group receives a +2 to their next attack manoeuvre. This may only be used on the first round of an attack and when the players have the initiative.

✧ Noble Cause

Requires For Justice!

Once you explain your background or the circumstances of your travel outside of your world to friendly or receptive people you receive a +2 bonus on Rapport Skill checks to secure aid from another character. Can only be used once per game session.

✧ Lucky Artefact

Requires For Justice!

You have a special item, which has been handed down through the centuries. It can take a minor

consequence on your behalf but is never broken. The consequence 'heals' as if it was taken by you and so it cannot take a further consequence until the previous one is removed.

✧ Legendary Artefact

Requires Lucky Artefact

You have a legendary artefact or weapon. The artefact can absorb a minor consequence on your behalf and gives you a special ability (see Chapter 14) whilst you carry the artefact. If it is a weapon, it has the same bonuses as any other weapon. Alternatively it can be created using the Artefact & Gadget rules on page 80.

Pirate / Rebel

Sometimes a government drives its people to the edge and they are forced to steal what they need to survive. At other times, greedy people just decide to take things by force. Rebels might be fighting for a just cause or to improve their lot, whilst pirates might be evil cutthroats who take what they can carry and leave no one alive.

✧ Member of a Secret Organisation

You are a member of a secret pirate or rebel organisation. This can be created in conjunction with the player using the rules in the Organisations chapter or determined by the Story Teller. The player should come up with the name or pick it from the organisations detailed in Chapters 28 or 31.

✧ Smell Authority

You get a +1 on Alertness Skill checks to detect undercover intelligence and security services operatives. You also have a sixth sense for impending raids by security services agents and get +1 in Alertness checks in the first round of a conflict involving them.

✧ Access to Pirated Goods

Requires Member of a Secret Organisation

You receive a +1 bonus on a Resource roll once during the game session. If the roll fails you may not use the bonus again for at least 1 month of game time.

✧ Access to Secret Organisation Resources

Requires Member of a Secret Organisation

You are a senior member of the secret organisation and may call upon the backup of other members. You can direct the use of any one of the organisation's Resources or Skills in one action, once per game session. Backup comes in the form of a small gang of pirates or an attack ship (if available), with Skills at the same level as the organisation's relevant Arms Skill.

✧ Access to Weapons

Requires Access to Pirated Goods

At character creation, or whenever this Stunt is acquired, you may choose weapons, armour or energy shields with a total bonus of +2 regardless of cost. Thereafter you receive a +1 bonus once per game session on one Resource Skill check to acquire weapons, armour or energy shields. If the roll fails, you may not try again until the beginning of the next adventure or until 1 month has passed in game time.

✧ Access to Restricted Equipment

Requires Access to Weapons

Instead of the choice of weapons and armour in Access to Weapons, the character may choose weapons and/or armour or energy shields with a total bonus of +4 regardless of cost. Thereafter the player is allowed to make Resource Skill rolls to acquire any weapon with a bonus of +4 or higher, armour or energy shields with a bonus of -3. If the rolls fail, they may not try again until the beginning of another adventure or 1 month has passed in game time.

Sci-Tech

(Fi-Sci, Engineer, Scientist)

You're on the edge of discovery. You help support the pillars of a great civilisation by constantly developing new technologies, new fixes or new gadgets to do things people once thought impossible. Sometimes, the technology must be used to defend what you believe in. The Fi-Sci leads that fight. Other times you've just got your head down, as the technology is more important to you than its use.

✧ Access to Labs

You know how to get access to the right kind of laboratory or research tools for any field. Receive +2 on one Science Skill check during a game session.

✧ Sci-Tech

Requires Access to Labs

You can use your Science Skill instead of Engineering and vice versa.

✧ Lab Requisitions

You have +2 to a Resource Skill check once per game session.

✧ Major Gadget

Requires Access to Labs

You have access to gadgets and those who develop them. Once per month of game time, you can request a gadget that fulfils a particular task with the Resources Skill check difficulty based on what you want the gadget to be able to do. If successful, it is delivered within a few days; a failure indicates the number of weeks before its delivery. The number of shifts can be used as a measure of the quality of the device or of the number of improvements it has.

KURNIK HAD STUDIED THE ORNOCRAFT ON SUBSTATION 602, WHERE THE SYRAN ARTIFACTS HAD BEEN TAKEN.
THOSE ARE POWER TERMINALS! THE WINGS COLLECT SOLAR ENERGY AND CONVERT IT THROUGH THOSE TERMINALS INTO GAMMA PULSES WHICH DRIVE IT FORWARD.
IT'S GOING TO NEED AN ENERGY INPUT IF IT'S TO FLY OUT OF HERE.

THIS TIME HE DIDN'T BOTHER TO SHOUT A WARNING . . .
URRRGGGHHH!
UGH!
. . . HE LET HIS POLICE ISSUE COLT/IBM PHOTONITE PISTOL DO THE TALKING!

Security

(Star Patrol, Star Lord, Law Lord, Special Agent, Bounty Hunter)

Out on patrol you're the only thing between the lawless and the helpless. It's up to you to bring civilisation's rule to the furthest reaches of the galaxy and ensure that those who oppose what is right get what's coming to them. For Law Lords, their word is the law and they may carry out judgement there and then. Star Patrol, however, are the galactic police and must bring criminals back for trial. If you're not wearing an obvious badge you're probably a secret agent working for the government, or a private organisation.

✧ Backup

You can call on backup from the local police or security forces if it is reasonable that some would be nearby. Backup will consist of one or two operatives with relevant Skills at Average +1. Alternatively see the chapter on Organisations if you want them to be representative of the organisation in question.

✧ Local Office Resources

Requires Backup

You can use the resources—computer facilities, local transport—and request equipment or backup to accompany you on local missions concerning law and order. Receive +1 on a Resource Skill check once per game session.

✧ The Law

Requires Local Office Resources

You have the backing of the law – if you're a Star Lord or Law Lord your s word itself is law. This does not mean you can demand anything; local governments must act within the law and help you in accordance with their lawful obligations. For example, a government won't leave their world unprotected, and convicted criminals cannot be freed without good reason and evidence. You receive a further +1 on a Resource Skill check once per game session.

If you choose to abuse the power, you must assign an Aspect of Corrupt and a Stunt called Corrupt. Each time you act wrongly you add another Corrupt Stunt.

Each Corrupt Stunt adds a +1 to any Skill checks based around corrupt actions. Once your total Stunts reaches 10 you become an Extra, leaving play. The only way to reduce the number of corrupt Stunts is to make a sacrifice for innocent people or to own up to each crime and suffer the legal consequences, which should be severe.

✧ Access to a Ship

Requires Local Office Resources

If one is available, you can request a patrol ship (or something similar) to use until you reach the next outpost.

✧ Cover Me!

Requires Backup

If you are working with a partner, you may pay a Fate point to tag your partner's Gun Skill to provide a bonus of the partner's Gun Skill level to a combat related manoeuvre.

✧ Access to Weapons

Requires Local Office Resources

At character creation, or whenever this Stunt is acquired, you may choose weapons, armour or energy shields with a total bonus of +2 regardless of cost. Thereafter you receive a +1 bonus once per game session on one Resource Skill check to acquire weapons, armour or energy shields. If the roll fails, you may not try again until the beginning of the next adventure or until 1 month has passed in game time.

✧ Access to Restricted Equipment

Requires Access to Weapons

Instead of the choice of weapons and armour in Access to Weapons you may choose weapons and/or armour or energy shields with a total bonus of +4 regardless of cost. Thereafter you are allowed to make Resource Skill rolls to acquire any weapon with a bonus of +4 or higher, armour or energy shields with a bonus of -3. If the roll fails, you may not try again until the beginning of the next adventure or until 1 month has passed in game time.

Character Ideas

While players have the leeway to explore any ideas that interest them, it's worth remembering that the Starblazer comics have a handful of easily recognizable character types. Here's a few to give you some ideas if you're stuck for a character concept, or the career suggestions don't seem to inspire you.

Academic

The academic lives somewhere between the scientist and the explorer. He is compelled by his interest in his field, which is usually something like history, linguistics, anthropology or (most famously) alien archaeology. The academic knows that lost, hidden, and forgotten knowledge exists all over the galaxy. Ancient ruins, obscure libraries, mysterious artifacts – all these can offer answers to questions that have not even been asked yet.

*What are **you** doing:* You are answering questions, finding what was lost, and trying to expand the breadth of human knowledge.

Barbarian Lord

When we speak of the barbarian lord, we're talking about heroic princes or lowly serfs that have grown up on backward or mysterious worlds, or long lost colonies regressed to pre-technological levels. The barbarian lord is aware of the greater galaxy and is on a mission to free his people or to acquire much-needed aid. He often possesses some great artifact to aid him in his quest.

Usually awkward in the face of civilisation, these heroes act with a simpler understanding of things like justice. But with time, they can become bridges between two worlds.

*What are **you** doing:* You're protecting your home, and attempting to understand the world outside.

Charming Criminal

Crime is usually a nasty thing, fueled by necessity, but for some it is the only true challenge available. Usually possessed of copious talents, enough that they have already found success elsewhere, charming criminals pursue a life of crime because of its excitement. Such characters enjoy the good life and civilisation, so the adventures of exploration hold no appeal to them, especially when compared to the thrill of the chase, outwitting security forces, and similar brushes with danger across the galaxy. In this futuristic age, when a world becomes too hot, it is but a simple thing to change identities and move on to the next.

Often, these criminals become sociopathic masterminds as they turn more and more to crime. But others maintain a certain basic, albeit twisted, honesty

that informs their crimes. A burglar may have a strong code to harm no-one, or may rob from the rich to give to the poor. An assassin may only accept contracts on those he feels society is better off without. Most such ethical criminals can be convinced to leave their past behind them and use their talents to more challenging, world-bettering ends, but true retirement is not often in their nature.

*What are **you** doing:* You're trying to find something worth doing. When you find it, you seize the opportunity.

Explorer

Though much of the map of the galaxy is filled in, even more remains blank or is simply wrong. The explorer thrives on discovering who and what is in those unknown places. The khaki-clad, laser axe wielding explorer is perhaps the most obvious, but the same spirit can beat in the hearts of Starship captains, naval officers, merchants, or even ambassadors.

*What are **you** doing:* You're discovering the galaxy, opening new worlds and seeking lost secrets and treasures.

Gadget Guy

The gadget guy is the recipient of the wonders of science. He is the keeper of a unique piece of technology (alien or invented), usually at the behest of its creator. The creator may or may not still be alive and serving as a patron for him (and in some cases, the creator and the gadget guy are the same person!). The device in question is usually quite potent, and serves as a signature for the character – something interesting and immediately recognizable, like an alien weapon or a legendary Starship.

*What are **you** doing:* With great technology comes great responsibility. Your gadget has made you more capable of taking action (whatever action you pursue), so you have embraced it.

Naval Man

The service is the Naval Man's life. He lives to uphold the very foundations of civilisation against the rising tide of alien invasion, pirates and rebellion which threatens to tear the empire apart. The Naval Man has trained since an early age, those under his command trust his every word, and he has proven himself in countless conflicts to be one of the bravest captains of the fleet.

He may live by the book, even if that damns him in the eyes of others, or he may bend the rules to act justly, out on the rim, where the laws of civilisation don't often help the common man.

*What are **you** doing:* You're keeping the lights of civilisation alive out on the rim, and bringing aid to those who can't defend themselves. You will lay down your life for those who serve you and for the leaders you serve.

News Reporter

One of the things that makes the galaxy so much smaller is the news. Hundreds or thousands of years back, if something happened a few star systems away, or anywhere else in the galaxy, it would take time to trickle into the awareness of the average person.

Now, with the galactic news service ensuring news is passed on as fast as possible, people know what's going on almost as soon as it happens. The demand for regular news is fierce and competitive, and in this day and age, "The Exclusive" means a substantial advantage for news channels – if you've got the inside story it means trillions in advertising revenue, and a very happy boss!

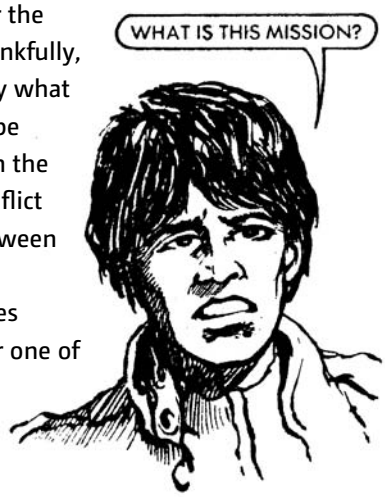
With this in mind, news channels are always looking for news of the exotic and interesting, and they're willing to tolerate a lot of wierdness from a reporter who can bring in the big story.

*What are **you** doing:* You are finding out everything you can so you can share it with the galaxy.

Operator

The Operator is an agent, perhaps for a government agency that can't be acknowledged, perhaps for a secret organization. He may not know himself. But it means he's connected (well connected), and is privy to secrets that others just don't know about.

His job? Whatever the agency says it is. Thankfully, that is usually exactly what the Operator would be interested in doing in the first place. When conflict eventually arises between the operator and the agency, it usually goes very badly indeed for one of them or the other.



*What are **you** doing:* You're serving a greater cause – perhaps for your government, or perhaps a higher or more secret authority than that.

Primitive

Usually of a people that some explorer has 'discovered', the primitive is an outsider in the world that other heroes operate in. The subject of condescension and curiosity, he is also the keeper of knowledge that has been lost, or not yet discovered, by the people from the civilised worlds.

Perhaps this knowledge is some form of "magic" or something more recognisable as science, like an understanding of something far beyond what man has discovered. One way or another, the primitive is usually quite sophisticated, albeit in a way that most people don't recognize.

*What are **you** doing:* You are representing your people, looking for knowledge to take back to them, or perhaps trying to carve out a new life in exile.

Science Hero

The science hero is brilliant, tough, strong, basically better than you at everything, and made that way by science!

Thankfully, most science heroes are slightly less obvious examples of the superman incarnate. A science hero may be very much like a gadget hero, someone who has benefited from extreme science in some way – perhaps making them a little stronger, tougher or faster than they would have been. Such characters tend to be well-rounded but their specific interests are frequently tied to their origin.

*What are **you** doing:* You do a bit of everything, taking on all-comers.

Scientist

In ***Starblazer***, science has been one of the corner-stones of the rise of human civilisation, and everyone has an interest in it. Despite that, it is easy to spot the committed scientist, master of one or more fields, dedicating his time and effort to the pursuit of science. Whereas other heroes seek adventure and appreciate science, the scientist seeks science and appreciates adventure.

While the scientist may have sophisticated labs and automated design systems, there is still too much to be found, too many theories to be tested, too much to do, to simply stay locked up with your computer.

Scientists can have one or more fields of interest, which will generally be reflected by their equipment. A chemist or botanist may have a steady supply of bizarre and unique concoctions, while an engineer might have exotic gadgets or weapons.

*What are **you** doing:* You're challenging assumptions and testing theories, bringing science out into the field with the intention of proving a theory that can solve a problem or create something new and beneficial for civilisation.

Shadow Man

There is no magic, only things science does not yet understand – and there are a lot of those. The Shadow Man has delved into these secrets, whether it's the true workings of the mind, the strange powers of lost alien civilisations, or perhaps a dark gift from another dimension. Whatever this knowledge is, it separates him from his fellow man, often so much that the hero adopts a persona to allow separation between his heroic personality and his normal life.

There's a proximity to madness which mystery invites that can mean these heroes are of a darker, more disturbing character than the norm. They flit through the galaxy as a shadow, barely noticed, but when they bring their strange powers to bear it will light up the sky.

*What are **you** doing:* You've seen the darkness, and you're on a mission to strike it down. You're punishing those who think they're above punishment.

Two-Fisted Pilot

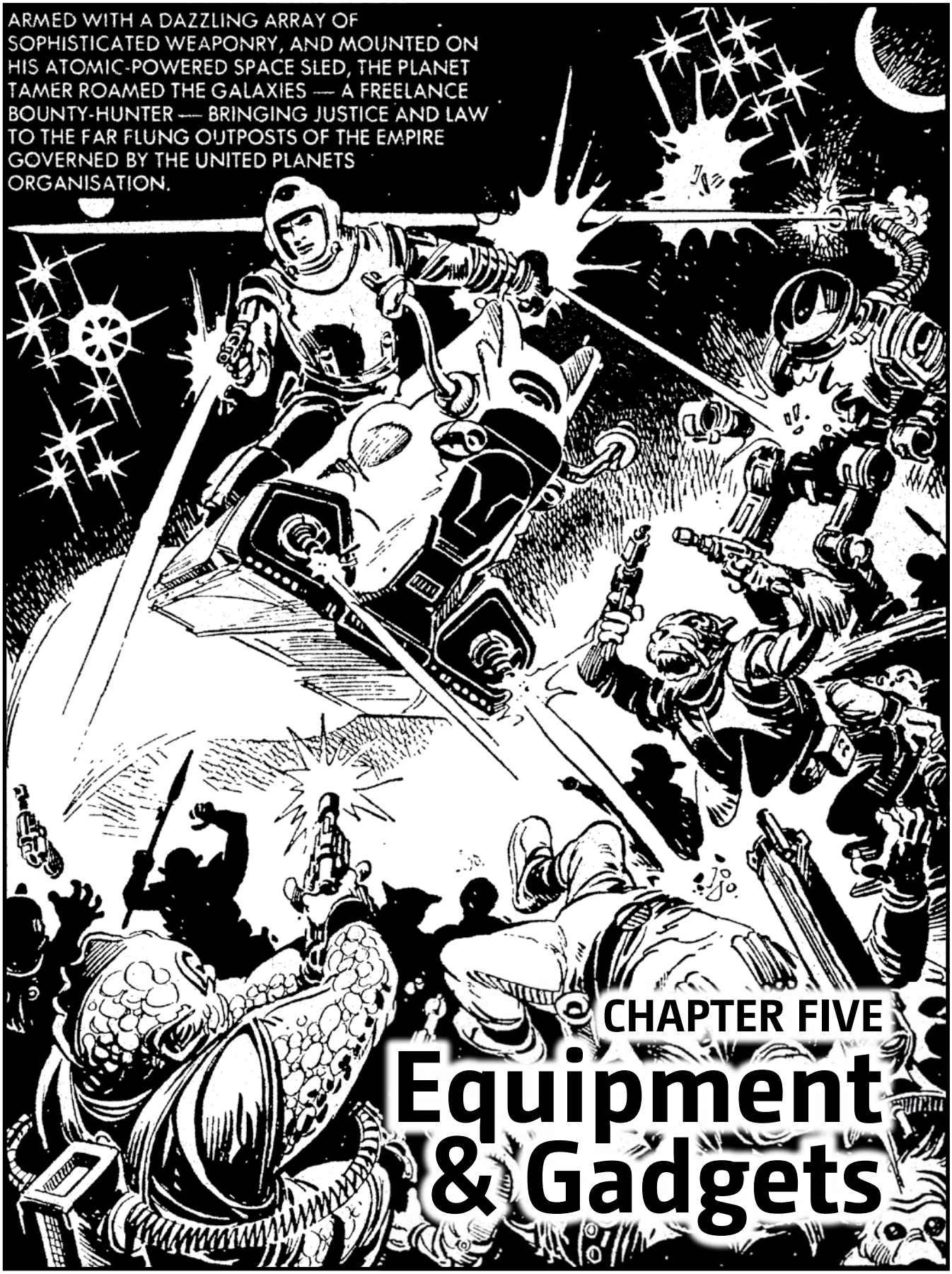
Navigating the stars, plying the trade routes or dodging customs ships on just one more smuggling run, the two-fisted pilot is as accustomed to his Starship as he is the bars he drinks in at the end of every journey. Whether it's the rough and tumble of life in the space ports, or traveling between the many worlds, the two-fisted pilot is truly following his guiding star.

The pilot shares much of his spirit with the explorer, and in many ways is the next step in the chain of discovery. The explorer may find an exotic new world, but it is the pilot who ties it in to the rest of the galaxy.

The many galactic wars have made pilots into dashing, romantic figures as pilots re-connect lost worlds with civilisation. Commercial realities of the galactic economy make them invaluable.

*What are **you** doing:* You're connecting the galaxy to itself. Your passion is in seeing all there is to see, going to strange and exotic worlds bringing the outside along for the ride, and taking a piece with you when you leave.

THIS WAY!
THE MATERIALS WHICH THE SHREEL HAD USED TO REBUILD RENKO'S SHATTERED BODY GAVE IT INCREDIBLE STRENGTH — WHICH HE NOW USED TO GREAT EFFECT!
BY THE STARS — SOME EXIT!


ARMED WITH A DAZZLING ARRAY OF SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY, AND MOUNTED ON HIS ATOMIC-POWERED SPACE SLED, THE PLANET TAMER ROAMED THE GALAXIES — A FREELANCE BOUNTY-HUNTER — BRINGING JUSTICE AND LAW TO THE FAR FLUNG OUTPOSTS OF THE EMPIRE GOVERNED BY THE UNITED PLANETS ORGANISATION.

CHAPTER FIVE
Equipment & Gadgets

Equipment and Gadgets

What space opera adventure would be worth giving up the farm for if it didn't have a ton of cool weapons, gadgets, Starships, anti-gravity cars and alien artefacts lying around just waiting to be used!

Please bear in mind the purpose of this chapter is not to give you endless items to fill up your character sheet. The most useful, important and story-led items are detailed (along with any necessary rules), plus a list of equipment from the pages of ***Starblazer*** for use as a source of inspiration.

Remember ***Starblazer Adventures*** is about fast moving stories, not vast inventories of gear!

Acquiring Equipment

During Character Creation

Mundane Things

Characters have basic things like clothing, ID, watches, makeup, communicators, and uniforms relating to their chosen career or background. All of these can be added for free but if the character wants there to be a particular mundane or conventional item that they will always have with them, whatever the situation, it should be discussed with the Story Teller and written down.

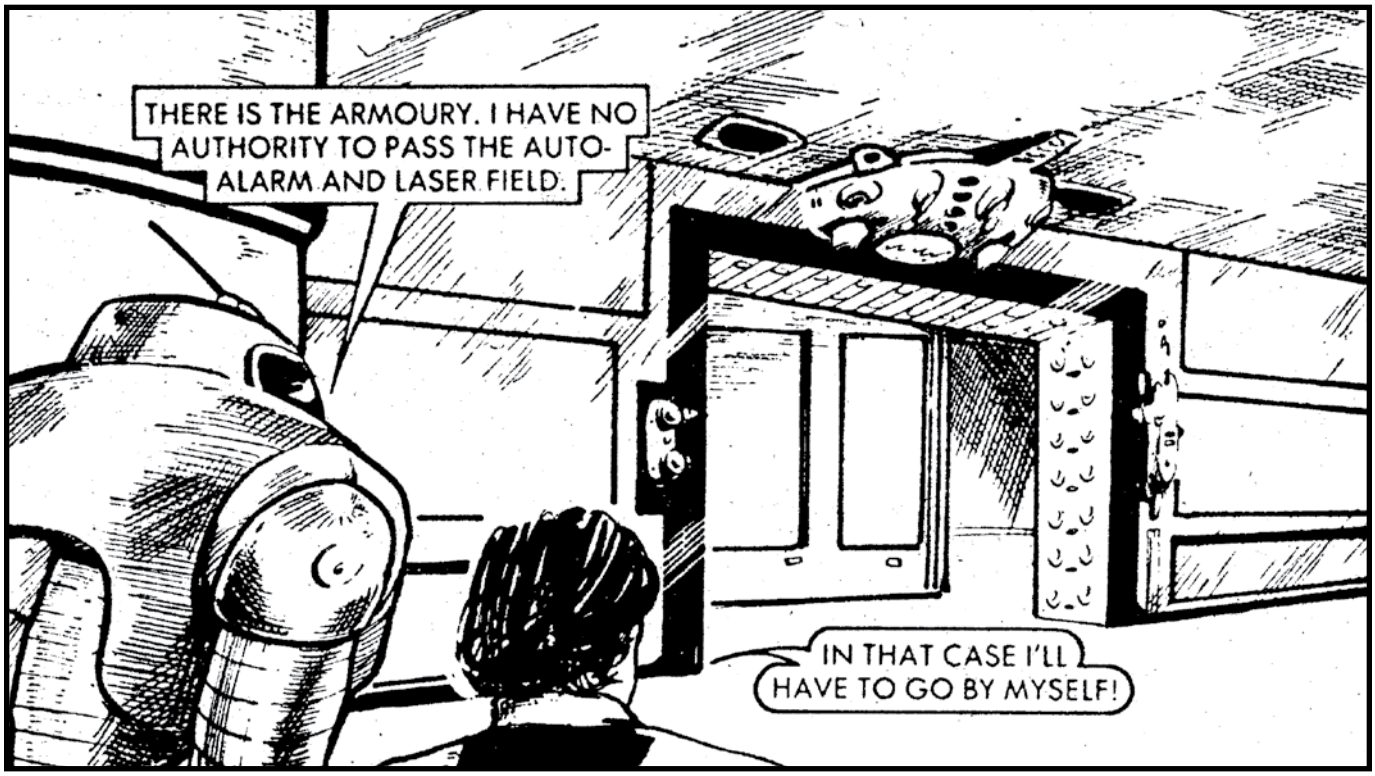
Purchasing Equipment

During character creation you can choose one piece of equipment that is rated Mediocre (+0) cost for every Aspect and Stunt you have. It's assumed you have it as part of your job or you had money to buy it. However it should be something that is related to that Aspect or Stunt.

A character can actually choose any piece of equipment, even a starship, but items like these can be very expensive and sometimes hard to find or restricted to certain people. If a piece of equipment has a cost higher than Mediocre then a Resource skill check must be made to acquire it, using the cost as the difficulty. You can make a Resource skill check for a relevant piece of equipment for every Stunt and Aspect your character has. There is a risk, though—as soon as you fail a Resource skill check, you may not use your Resource skill again during character creation. Players may not use Fate points to give bonuses to Resource skill rolls during character creation.

Some items are marked with an asterisk (*) which means they are restricted and only certain types of people should be able to get hold of them – such as the military, pirates, rebels and the law. It's up to the Story Teller's discretion whether these restrictions are imposed in different places. Certainly in the rougher parts of galaxy, more dangerous bits of equipment could be 'normal' to own.

There is also a benefit of doing things as a group—for every member of the group that gives up the chance to take a piece of equipment for a related Aspect of Stunt, they can give a +1 bonus to another member of the group.



For example...

Brandon Carter is creating a brave Star Patrol officer. The group agrees that it would be useful for him to have a Mark IV Photon Blaster for the mission ahead. Since he's a member of Star Patrol and has chosen Access to Restricted Equipment as a Stunt he's allowed to put in a request for the blaster. Brandon has a Resource skill of Average (+1) so with the blaster's cost of Epic (+7) it's going to take a huge effort on his part to convince his superiors that he needs this costly and dangerous weapon. Unaided it's beyond even his powers of persuasion, so his team mates Astraade and Danielle Dubois both agree to give up the chance of a piece of equipment to give him a +1 bonus each. Brandon rolls +4 on the dice, added his Average (+1) Resource skill and the +2 bonus from his friends for a total of +7 means he succeeds. Brandon grins and says that he just managed to convince his captain of the terrible danger Earth will be in if he doesn't have this powerful weapon at hand.

Players can add as many bonuses together as they like, but this must be done before their Resource skill check. So if you really fancy that Starship, better make friends with your fellow players! Think the group should have an Android companion? Time to share!

Of course it's possible the Story Teller will let you get access to a Starship through the course of the game anyway, but do you really think it will come without a hitch? Remember there's no such thing as a free ship!

After Character Creation

The higher a character's Resources Skill, the more likely they will be able to obtain the gear as they need it. A player will find themselves in one of two situations where they need a piece of equipment, either during an adventure in the middle of nowhere, or during downtime: hanging out in a city, base or space station preparing for a mission.

In The Field

(situations where resources are not readily available)

For situations in the middle of nowhere, where it's really down to what the character brought with them, there is a way of "retroactively" working out whether they actually did bring something they needed. The character uses their Resources Skill to add gear to their

inventory there and then: it turns out they actually had it with them but had not confirmed it until they looked for it.

In this situation 'in the field', the Story Teller sets a difficulty 1 level higher than the equipment's cost. If the character can make the Resources roll, the gear is assumed to have already been with them.

For example...

Brandon is searching the corridors of a pirate base, looking for Drake Black the assassin. Up ahead the lights are flickering and he realises he'll need a torch. Whilst it's not on his list of equipment it makes sense that Brandon, a Star Patrol officer would have a piece of equipment like this. As this is standard piece of equipment the Story Teller rules that he'd have it with him and doesn't need to roll, remember keep the story going!

Non-mundane equipment with a cost above Mediocre like weapons, shields, vehicles or anything restricted requires **the expenditure of a Fate point** to allow the player to attempt a Resource check 'in the field'. The Fate point does not provide any bonus, it simply allows the attempt. The player must also think of an explanation for the presence of the equipment or agree with the Story Teller to provide a localised means of acquiring the equipment. A failure to acquire a piece of equipment in this method means that the character cannot try to acquire the same or similar piece of equipment until they are back at base or gain access to a supplier.

For example...

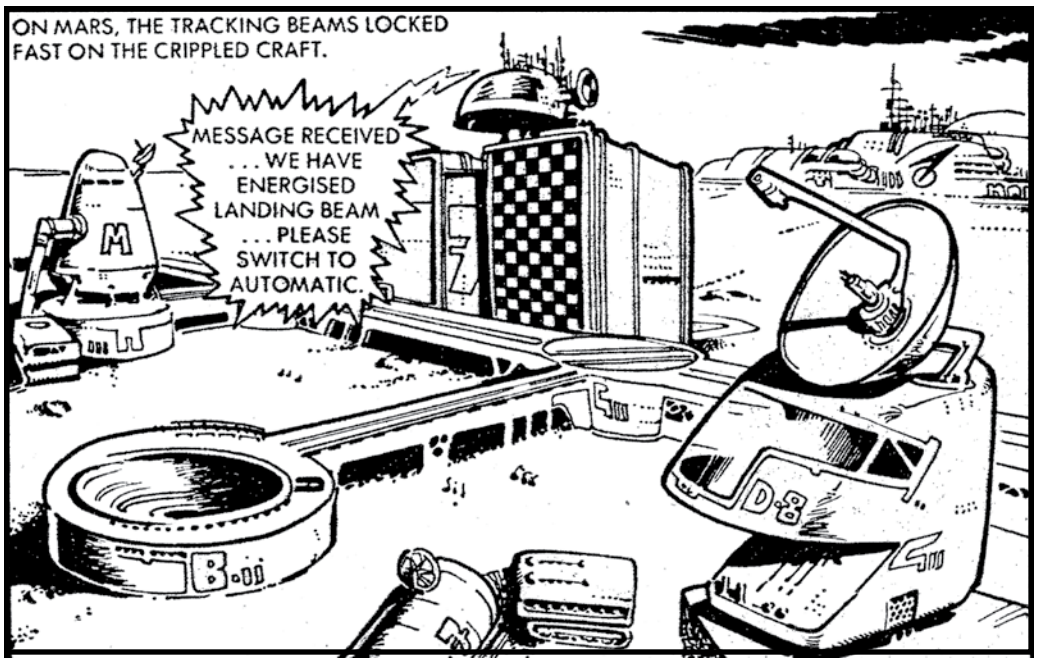
Brandon decides he'd like to scan the corridor ahead for robot guards and needs a hand scanner. The Story Teller says there's a chance he has one—it's restricted but Brandon has the Access to Restricted Equipment stunt. He needs to pay a Fate point and roll against Great difficulty with his Resource skill since the cost of the hand scanner is Good, modified by +1 whilst 'in the field' to Great.

The difficulty level may be influenced by circumstances. For example, if Brandon has had to strip off to swim through the flooded air ducts of a submerged Starship and then realises he needs a multi-tool to repair the life support, this will probably increase the difficulty by two 'in the field'. It would be reasonable to assume the character chose only a few important items on a utility belt to bring with them.

Back at Base

(anywhere with access to resources)

During adventures or downtime, if a character gets to a shop that sells equipment or gets access to his own extra gear, the player can ask to try a Resources skill roll. A success indicates he had enough funds to make the purchase, that the equipment he wanted was available, in store, or on hand. Failure means the player cannot make another Resource Skill roll for a period of game time set by the Story Teller. *"Sorry Chief, delivery not till next week".*


ON MARS, THE TRACKING BEAMS LOCKED FAST ON THE CRIPPLED CRAFT.
MESSAGE RECEIVED . . . WE HAVE ENERGISED LANDING BEAM . . . PLEASE SWITCH TO AUTOMATIC.

Equipment Listing

The equipment list below contains a selected set of equipment, detailing any bonuses the gear provides to game play or the power of the item, its range (if

any), the cost (shown as a difficulty to acquire it) and any special effects or information. An asterisk next to the cost means it is restricted and requires the Stunt 'Access to Restricted Equipment' to allow a Resource roll to obtain it. Some pieces of expensive or difficult to acquire equipment may require more than one successful Resource skill check, representing the time, money and effort it would take the character to get their hands on it.

Grenades

When a character acquires grenades this means that they have a pack of 3 except for Radiation and Biological grenades which come in packs of 1.

Remember, grenades are deadly and should be used carefully within your campaign. Range is in zones.

Special Grenade Effects

Except for explosive, biological and radiation grenades which are treated as described on page 238, the power of the grenade is the difficulty to recover from the effects, get out of the cloud, release yourself, escape the cloud or get your senses together. Each round after the round in which the character is first hit, the character may roll their Athletics skill against the power of the grenade to recover from the effects of the grenade and may act on the same round they recover.

Grenade Type	Power	Range	Cost
Biological	Fantastic	2	Fantastic*

Biological grenades cover gas, acid, toxin, nerve, virus and other forms of nasty biological warfare weapons. Needless to say the more horrific versions are banned in most civilisations. They explode covering everything in the agent or release a toxic cloud. The power is the Athletic skill check to reach any suitable cover such as an airtight door, vehicle or other means of avoiding contact with an airborne agent. Otherwise the affected character takes a Major consequence relating to the agent. At purchase, the character must decide what form of agent the grenade contains (if they have a choice).

Black Cloud (smoke)	Fantastic	1	Good

These emit rolling clouds of pitch black oily smoke which quickly fills every corner. The power is the Athletic skill check to avoid getting lost in the cloud. Any character who falis this roll suffers from a 'lost in cloud and blind!' Aspect until he can escape the cloud.

EMP	Fantastic	1	Superb*

EMP grenades deliver a massive burst of energy that puts electrical equipment such as robots or computers out of action. They have no effect on living creatures. The power is the Athletics skill roll needed for the target to avoid a Major 'stunned' consequence. If the target fails the skill check by 3 or the target is stationary the consequence becomes Extreme.

Explosive	Fantastic	1	Great*

These cause considerable physical damage. The power is Athletics skill check required to avoid an Extreme physical damage consequence (or taken out for Extras & Minions). Success reduces Consequence by one level per shift.

Grenade Type	Power	Range	Cost
Snare	Fantastic	1	Good

Snare grenades tangle the target in a mess of strong sticky strands. The power is the Athletic skill check needed to avoid a Major 'snared' consequence.

Sonic	Fantastic	1	Good

Sonic grenades emit a high pitched burst of sound aimed at stunning anything with audio receptions whether biological or machine. The power is the Athletics skill check needed to avoid a Major 'stunned' consequence for biological beings. For machines it simply incurs a Major 'Sound loss' consequence.

Stun	Fantastic	1	Good

Stun grenades can stun most biological entities with an overload of electrical charge. The power is the Athletics skill check needed to avoid a Major 'stunned' consequence.

Radiation	Fantastic	2	Fantastic*

Forbidden in most civilisations, the radiation grenade is a dirty weapon (see page 238 for radiation effects). The power is the Athletics skill check to get behind any suitable radiation shielding if it is present in the same zone, or to get through a radiation shielded door. The whole zone becomes permanently irradiated until it can be cleaned up by suitable means. Regardless of whether the character reaches any form of radiation shielding, they must then make an Endurance skill check to see if their body is affected by the radiation that reaches them. See page 238 for radiation shielding and the effects of radiation. The power of the Radiation starts at Fantastic and is reduced by shielding.

B

Explosives

The use of explosives is covered in detail on page 239. Remember that using explosives is highly dangerous and can lead to characters being 'taken out' very quickly.

Explosive Type	Force	Comp.	Area	Cost
Military Grade	Leg.	Epic	2	Epic
Home made	Sup.	Sup.	1	Great
Mining Explosive	Fant.	Fant.	1	Superb
Improvement: Hair Trigger.				
Plastic Explosive	Epic	Fant.	2	Fant
Improvement: Hair Trigger.				

Defence

Characters can acquire armour and shields to protect them from the many dangerous weapons in use across the galaxy. See page 233 for details of how to use armour and shields.

Defence Type	Bonus	Cost
Light Armour	-1	Great
Protects against projectile weapons		
Medium Armour	-2	Superb*
Protects against projectile weapons		
Heavy Armour	-3	Fantastic*
Protects against projectile weapons		
Assault Armour	-3	Epic*
Protects against projectile weapons		
Light Energy Shield	-1	Superb
Protects against energy weapons		
Medium Energy Shield	-2	Fantastic*
Protects against energy weapons		
Heavy Energy Shield	-3	Epic*
Protects against energy weapons		
Assault Energy Shield	-3	Legendary*
Protects against energy weapons		

** Requires stunt 'Access to Restricted Equipment' to allow a resource skill roll to acquire this piece of equipment*

Weapons & Guns

Weapons either cause extra stress damage when they hit or incur certain special effects. Range is in zones.

Special Weapons

We've also included some examples of weapons from ***Starblazer*** that have unusual or special effects.

Weapon	Bonus	Range	Cost
Fists	+0	0	N/A
Blade	+1	1 TH	Mediocre
Energy knife	+2	1 TH	Good*
Hand gun	+2	1	Good
Sword	+2	0	Fair
Auto rifle	+3	3	Great
SMG	+3	2	Great
Energy pistol	+4	1	Superb*
Sniper Rifle	+4	4	Superb*
HMG	+5	3	Fantastic*
Rocket launcher	+5	3 EX	Epic*
Explosive. Treat as grenade effect on target zone.			
Energy rifle	+5	4	Fantastic*
Energy Sword	+5	0	Fantastic*
Plasma launcher	+6	4 EX	Legendary*
Treat as Military Grade explosive effect on target & zone.			
Hypo Gun	Special	1	Good
A gun designed to fire a liquid agent into a target such as a tranquiliser, serum, truth drug, or virus by means of special darts. The contents of the darts should be a Great difficulty or higher to acquire (up to three doses) depending on the effect.			
Shok Gun	Special	1	Great
A powerful stun gun. If the target is hit they receive an incapacitated Major consequence. The target must make a Great difficulty Endurance skill check to recover.			
Shok-Stik	Special	0	Good
A powerful stun baton. A character uses the Weapon skill to attack with the Shok-Stick. If the target is hit they receive an incapacitated Major consequence and must make a Great difficulty Endurance skill check to recover.			
Snare Gun	Special	1	Great
A gun used to snare targets in sticky threads. If the target is hit they receive an incapacitated Major consequence and must make a Great difficulty Endurance skill check to escape.			
Mark IV Photon Blaster	+4	3	Epic*
A more powerful version of the Photon Blaster in a rifle form with a longer range. The Mark IV Photon Blaster is so powerful it can fire and help the owner target again very quickly. The Shifts generated on an attack equate to the number of targets hit. Each target must defend against the attack total and take any Shifts above their defense roll in stress damage.			
Meson Blaster	+6	3	Legendary*
The Meson Blaster is a very powerful weapon, and in the right hands it is one of the deadliest. If the attacker gets a natural +5 they can choose to inflict an automatic stun (requiring a Great difficulty Endurance skill check to recover from) or an extreme consequence on any scale 3 target or below. Otherwise the Meson Blaster inflicts the Shifts generated plus the damage bonus in stress.			
Photon Pistol	+2	1	Fantastic*
The photon pistol is so powerful it can fire and help the owner target again very quickly. The Shifts generated on an attack equate to the number of targets hit. Each target must defend against the attack total and take any Shifts above their defense roll in stress damage.			
Thermic Lance	Special	1	Epic*
A large and powerful engineering tool which can also be used as an assault weapon. The character uses Weapon skill to wield the Thermic Lance. If it hits it can burn through a barrier value equal to the Shifts generated. Alternatively Shifts can be used to burn through the same number of consequences (personal, vehicle, personal or vehicle based armour or energy shields).			

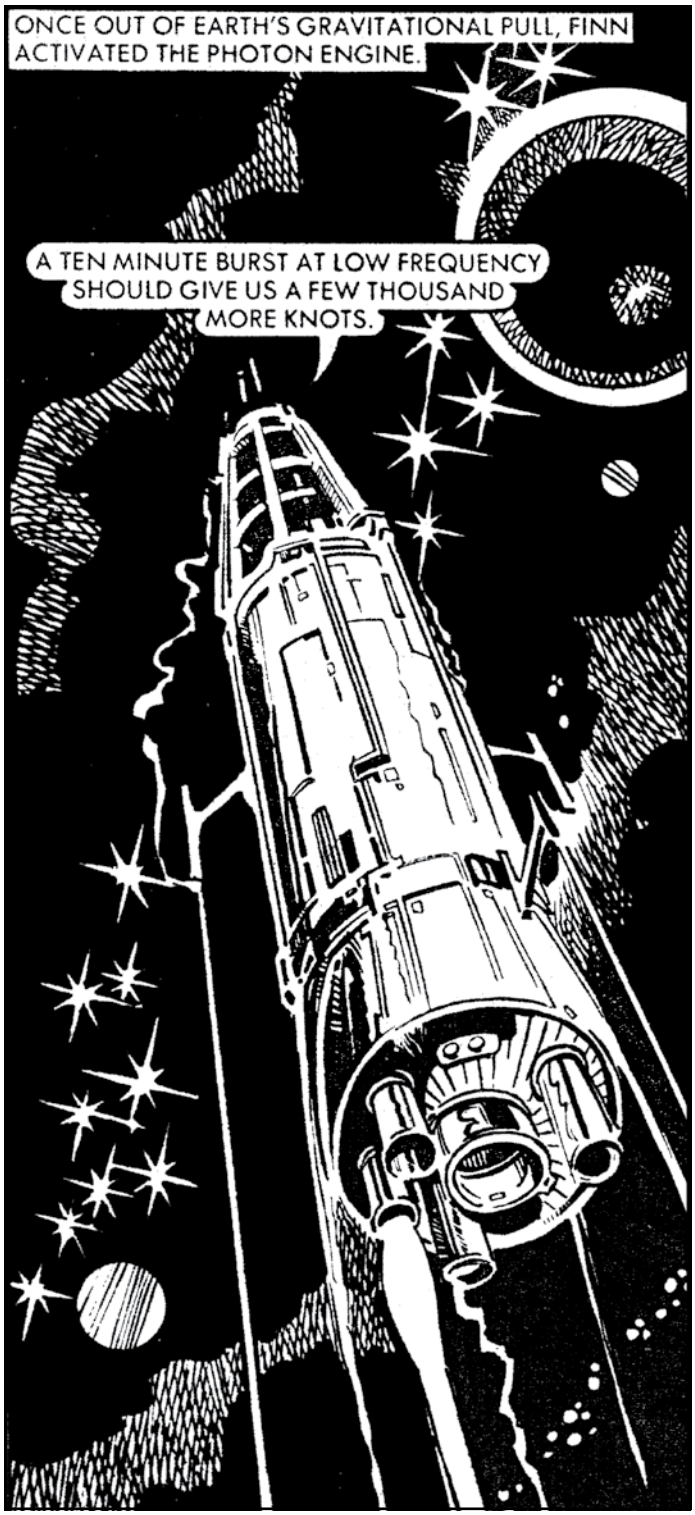
EX = Explosives Range TH = Thrown Range

(Try creating more weapons with names from the Starblazer equipment list on page 70 and the Weapon Effects table on page 232.)

Starships

The price of a starship depends on its scale and on whether it is 'advanced', meaning it has an expanded skill pyramid allowing for more equipment. Ships with expanded pyramids are usually military or experimental in nature. Ship types have asterisks next to them if they are restricted access, requiring the Stunt 'Access to Restricted Equipment'.

Starships and space stations are incredibly expensive and require considerable resources and time to build or to purchase and maintain. The cost is the number of successful Resource skill checks to secure the ship (through funds, construction time or requisition), with each skill check being part of the process of obtaining the ship. Each skill check must be taken one day at a time and failure or successes recorded. If one or more skill checks fail, the characters or organisation have the option of purchasing the ship on credit instead of paying for it outright. For each failure increase the cost of maintenance by one to cover repayments. Each failure also indicates oneyear of repayments that the purchaser must make until he owns the ship outright. After this the maintenance cost reverts to the standard cost.

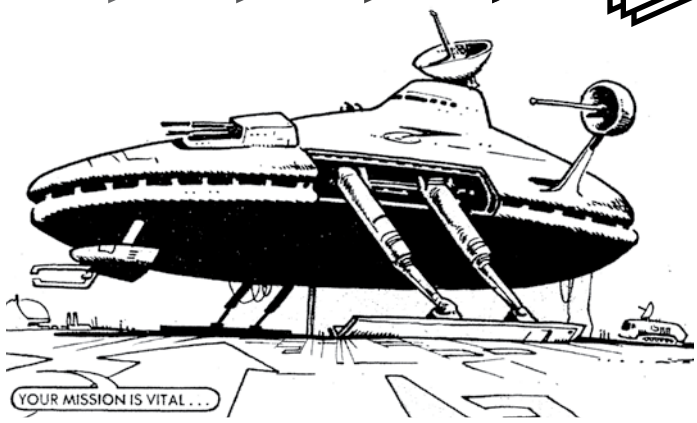

ONCE OUT OF EARTH'S GRAVITATIONAL PULL, FINN ACTIVATED THE PHOTON ENGINE.
A TEN MINUTE BURST AT LOW FREQUENCY SHOULD GIVE US A FEW THOUSAND MORE KNOTS.

For example...

Brandon and Astraade lost their last ship at the battle of Rourkes World and are once again stuck on the ground. Brandon has a Resource skill of Good and decides to buy a new ship. A Scoutship will require 3 Epic difficulty Resource skill checks to secure, meaning Brandon will need to get +4 or more on each of the three dice rolls. Luckily the duo has some resources, a Great (+4) value reward for a job well done from a previous mission. Cashing in this resource gives Brandon a total of +8 on his first attempt, however he still needs to roll the dice and sighs a relief when they come up -1 for a total of +7 meaning he has succeeded at the first check. The next day, for the second Resource skill check, the dice come up +2, for a total of +5. Brandon cashes in a Fate point to add +2 to the dice roll. On the third day he goes for the final test. Shocked, he rolls a -4, a disaster! As it's a new day he can use another Fate point and this time goes for a re-roll. The dice come up +2 for a total of +5, 2 short of the final total needed. That means Brandon can choose to take the ship, but on credit. Failing one Resource difficulty means there will be 1 year of repayments and the ships maintenance costs becomes one level higher, to Epic. Brandon and Astraade will have to work hard to make the payments each month.

Private individuals can only acquire starships up to Scale 4 Advanced covering improved and enlarged

Medium freighters, gunboats and patrol ships. Anything larger must be purchased by organisations. The Story Teller should feel free to make exceptions to this for the purpose of the story. For example the players may be assigned command of a larger ship but assume this is only temporary. Try to keep access to large ships limited. Players in control of large and dangerous mega-carriers quickly run out of dangerous threats, and the fun of small scale encounters can be diluted.



Maintenance

The maintenance cost is a Resource skill check that must be made once per month of game time to keep up the repayments (in the case of credit purchases) and to cover the fuel, maintenance costs and docking facilities. If a maintenance Resource skill check fails the ship could be repossessed (possibly starting a short mini-adventure) and until one month has passed, the ship gains the aspect 'In Disrepair' and suffers a -1 on all Skill checks. Each subsequent failure of a maintenance Resource skill check adds a cumulative -1 to ship skill checks. A maintenance Resource skill check may not be repeated during a month if it has been failed. Ship crews can pay for servicing to remove these effects during a month in which a maintenance check has failed, see page 362.

Re-possession

For each Maintenance check failed increase the period of repayments by one year (yes ouch!) as the lender

Starship Scale	Personal Cost	Personal Maintenance	Org. Scale	Cost	Maintenance Cost
Medium(3)	3 x Epic	Fantastic	5	-	-
Scouts, fighters, bombers, small freighters, shuttles.*					
Medium(3) §	4 x Epic	Fantastic	5 §	-	-
Scouts, fighters, bombers*, sm. freighters, shuttles.*					
Large(4)	3 x Legendary	Legendary	4	3 x Superb	Superb
Medium freighters, gunboats, patrol ships.*					
Large(4)§	4 x Legendary	Fantastic	4	4 x Superb	Superb
Medium freighters, gunboats, patrol ships*.*					
Huge(5)	N/A	N/A	5	3 x Superb	Superb
Small to medium capital ships, cruisers*, frigates*, destroyers*, large freighters, small space stations or Squadron of 12 x Scale 3 ships.*					
Huge(5) §	N/A	N/A	5	4 x Superb	Superb
Small to medium capital ships, cruisers*, frigates*, destroyers*, large freighters, small space stations or squadron of 12 x Scale 3 advanced ships.*					
Enormous(6)	N/A	N/A	8	3 x Superb	Superb
Large capital ships, carriers*, battleships*, medium space stations, squadron of 12 Scale 4 ships, wing of 3 Scale 5 ships.*					
Enormous(6) §	N/A	N/A	8	4 x Superb	Superb
Large capital ships, carriers*, battleships*, medium space stations, squadron of 12 Scale 4 advanced ships, wing of 3 Scale 5 advanced ships.*					
Colossal(7)	N/A	N/A	9	3 x Superb	Superb
Large space stations, Smaller colony ships, Squadron of 12 Scale 5 ships, wing of 3 Scale 6 ships.					
Colossal(7) §	N/A	N/A	9	4 x Superb	Superb
Large space stations, Larger colony ships, Squadron of 12 Scale 5 advanced ships, wing of 3 Scale 6 advanced ships.					

§ = Advanced

gets annoyed with the character's inability to pay their loan off and adds interest. If the characters fail a third Maintenance check (not necessarily in a row), the lender has had enough and sends a team to re-posses the ship. The Story Teller should consider the lending organisation (such as Smugglers or a Bank) and use an appropriate team with skills at the organisation's skill levels to intercept the characters.

General Personal Equipment

There's so much equipment being used across the galaxy that we can only give you a guide to some of the more popular items and how to create your own. Use the *Making Things* section (page 80) for gear not listed. Where applicable, range is in zones unless otherwise noted.

Sensors

Type	Bonus	Range	Cost
Hand Scanner	+1	1	Good*
Provides a bonus of +1 to Science or Engineering skill checks to detect heat, sound, movement, life signs, weather, moisture and other common elements. Characters with Science or Engineering skills get a +2 instead of +1 bonus and can detect more defined agents or chemical elements.			
Beacon/Tracer	+0	Planetary	Good
This comes in two parts—beacon and tracer. The tracer gives direction and distance to the beacon. If the user of the tracer does not have orbital support in the form of a friendly ship, or access to satellites or a space station, the Tracer can only detect the Beacon if it's in the same continent.			
Bugs/Tracer	+0	Solar System	Superb*
Requires orbital support in the form of a friendly ship, access to satellites or space stations, otherwise the Tracer can only pick up signals from the bug if it's in the same continent. The bugs are easy to hide (requires a Fantastic Alertness skill check to discover) and the package comes with the Tracer and 3 bugs. The tracer can track the bugs, listen in, view video imagery, pick up basic sensor information (life signs, heat, etc) and gives direction and distance to the beacon.			

Cloaking Suits

Type	Range	Cost
Personal Shroud	1	Superb*
Makes the wearer look like any other similar shaped figure (including uniform or clothing) and has enough power to last for 1 scene. Observers must make a Superb difficulty Alertness check to see through the Shroud.		
Invisibility shield	1	Fantastic*
Makes the wearer invisible and has enough energy to last for 1 scene.		
Heat cloak	1	Great
Covers the heat signature of the body and stops the wearer from being detected by heat-sensitive sensors.		
Sensor Baffle	1	Great*
Stops the wearer from being detected by Hand Scanners and other types of basic sensors. Law and military grade and starship security systems must make a Superb difficulty skill check to detect the wearer.		
Holo Projector	1	Superb
Projects a humanoid size image of the wearer's choice within the same zone. Observers must make a Superb difficulty Alertness check to realise it is a hologram.		
Disguise Kit	1	Good
Allows a character to make their face appear like another's. Observers must make a Great difficulty Alertness skill check to discover the disguise. The difficulty is modified by -1 if the disguise is supposed to look like someone they know well or work with regularly.		
Silencer	-	Mediocre*
Silences the sound of a projectile weapon firing. If a character is trying to use a projectile weapon quietly then people or sensors nearby must make a Superb difficulty Alertness skill check to hear the sound. This is increased by one for every point of barrier value between them and the firing weapon. If they are in the same zone with no barriers between them and the firing weapon decrease the difficulty by 2.		

Environment Suits

Type	Cost
Space Survival Suit	Good, or Average onboard a ship
Without a space survival suit a character suffers a consequence every turn they are exposed to vacuum. Characters can survive in the suit for a day of game time.	
Hazardous Environment Suit	Good
This provides one level of protection against radiation and full protection against toxic and biological agents, poisons and disease	

Uniforms

(of an organisation you don't belong to)

A successful Resource skill check means you have acquired a real uniform. Failure means you have access to a poor copy. Observers receive a bonus to discover the imposter equal to the amount by which the Resource check was failed. Starting difficulty to spot the fake is Great. Uniforms provide the same bonus as if you belonged to the organisation.

Type	Cost
Non-military	Great
Military standard uniform	Superb
Military dress uniform	Fantastic

Uniforms

(of an organisation you belong to)

Type	Bonus	Cost
Standard uniform	+1	Mediocre
Provides a bonus to Rapport when dealing with sub-ordinates		
Military Dress uniform	+1	Fair
For special occasions, provides a bonus to Rapport when dealing with sub-ordinates, members of the opposite sex and general public up to and including your citizen level (as defined on page 38).		

Personal Transport

These are some more unusual types of personal transport seen in ***Starblazer***. See Vehicles in Chapter 17 for the more usual forms of transportation.

Type	Cost	Stress	Speed
Grav Plate	Great	1	Average
One man anti-gravity plate that carries someone to a height of up to 5 zones for a few miles.			
Glide Chute	Good	1	Average
One man backpack mounted gliding kits used for emergency exit from flying vehicles. Glide chutes allow a guided landing and can be used to transport the wearer several miles from an airborne starting point.			
Grav Pack	Great	1	Good
One man backpack mounted short range anti-grav pack that can propel the wearer up to 10 zones in height and/or several miles.			

Skill Assistance Devices

These various gadgets provide a bonus to skill checks. Rather than have endless modifiers it is assumed that this equipment is useful in the course of a character's work, but occasionally makes a big difference—enough to provide a +1 bonus to the relevant skill check, *once per scene*. Effects of equipment are cumulative, so for example an Engineer using an Engineering PDA and a Multi-tool for a repair based Engineering skill check will get a total bonus of +2 once per scene or two +1's once per scene.

Personal Digital Assistant (PDA)

When a character purchases a PDA, they can choose one or two uses from the following list of skill assistance devices. The cost of a two-use PDA equals the more expensive of the PDA's two functions **plus one**. For example you could purchase a Science & Library PDA at just one Resource roll check of Great (+4).

Type	Bonus	Cost
Engineering	+1	Good
Engineering skill checks only		
Science	+1	Good
Science skill checks only		
Library	+1	Fair
Academic skill checks only		
Military	+1	Great*
Military based Leadership based skill checks only		
Starship System	+1	Great* / Good
Used for Starship Systems skill checks only		
Medical	+1	Good
Used for Medical Aid skill checks only		
Multi-tool	+1	Good
Used for repair based Engineering based skill checks		
Translator	+0	Good
The translator allows translation of common galactic languages unknown to the players. An Academics skill check is made vs. Good to understand a commonly used language, and vs. Fantastic for a new language. Failure in understanding a new language just means the Translator is still working on deciphering the language. A character may try again the next day		
Security Bypass	+1	Superb*
Bonus to Burglary to bypass security locks		
Med Kit	+1	Good
Add to a Science skill check for Medical Aid (page 187) and also to provide medical attention to someone with a Minor consequence. May only be used once per scene		
ParaMed Kit	+1	Superb
Add to a Science skill check for Medical Aid (page 187) and also to provide medical attention to someone with up to a Major consequence		
Surgeon's Kit	+1	Fantastic
Add to a Science skill check for Medical Aid (page 187) and also to provide medical attention to someone with up to a Severe consequence		

Type	Bonus	Cost
Stim	– 2 stress	Great
Pack of three stim injections that negate up to 2 physical or composure stress instantly. May be applied as a supplementary action		
Heal patch	1 Minor	Good
Absorbs 1 minor consequence as long as the wounded character does not move this turn or next. Patch is used up when applied		
Vehicle Repair Kit	+1	Superb
Bonus to Engineering skill checks to repair vehicles		
Equipment Repair Kit	+1	Superb
Bonus to Engineering skill checks to repair sophisticated equipment like energy shields, robots, etc		
Truth Scanner	+1	Fantastic
Add to Science skill check to find out if subject is telling the truth. Difficulty is subject's Resolve		
Mind Reader	+1	Epic
Add to Science skill check to find out if subject what subject knows. Difficulty is subject's Resolve		
Mind Controller	+1	Legendary
Add to Science skill check to turn a character in to a willing slave who must obey orders exactly. Effect lasts for one day. Difficulty is subject's Resolve		
Powerful Torch	+1	Mediocre
Adds +1 to an Alertness check in dark locations		
Mining Torch	+1	Fair
Small fusion cutter that can cut through one point of barrier per round or add +1 to Weapon skill		
Animal Friend	+1	Mediocre
A small device which emits calming rhythms to most known animals and helps soothe their thoughts, allowing the owner to calm them. Adds +1 to a Rapport check to make friends with an animal or calm an angry one		

Communications

Type	Cost
Communicator	Mediocre

Long range personal communicator that can reach any other communicator on a planet with satellite or space stations in orbit. Otherwise limited to reaching communicators in the same continent

Explorer's Communicator	Good

Allows communication between Explorer communicators across a planet with no communication technology and (via a friendly ship in system) across a solar system

Military Communicator	Great*

This is the same as the Explorer's Communicator unit but uses a coded signal which requires a Legendary difficulty check using Starship Advanced Sensors to intercept and decode

Other General Equipment

During character creation players can choose items with a Mediocre cost. You'll see we've included only a handful of items with Mediocre in this and other lists. There's a reason for that—they're 'mediocre' and not very important to the story.

Equipment in Starblazer is there to make a difference, not to take up space on your character sheet. Let players come up with standard items during character creation or when they're out shopping, perhaps using this list to inspire them. Generally it should be things that most people could buy easily or might already own. The Story Teller's decision is final on whether an item really is mediocre or should be assigned a cost.

Type	Cost
Plasti-Rope	Mediocre

Strong rope made of advanced micro fibres that can carry heavy loads (up to a Scale 3 load). It comes coiled inside a small device and can be withdrawn using a simple button. The end of the rope is marginally intelligent—at the press of a button, it can untie itself from a remote point to allow the user to recall the rope

Survival Kit	Mediocre

Covers most environments and contains water filters, medical kit, emergency rations, heater, micro fibre survival blanket, emergency beacon (see Beacon/ Tracer above) and other basic survival necessities for 4 people for 1 week, or 1 person for 4 weeks

Plasti-Cuffs	Mediocre*

Special plastic hand-cuffs which wrap themselves around target's limbs – either hands or feet. Target must be under control to attach to their limbs. Requires an Epic Might skill check to break free

Hot Evening wear	Superb

If you're planning on attending the governor's ball, a galactic premier or other major media event then you better be wearing something hot. Whether it's the latest designer dress or wild menswear this will ensure you get your share of paparazzi attention. Now you just need a few members of the opposite sex dripping off your arm. Wearing one of these adds +1 to a social based Rapport skill check once per scene as long as it is at a high class (social level 2 and below, page 38 in Character creation) social event

Type	Cost
Cool streetwear	Good

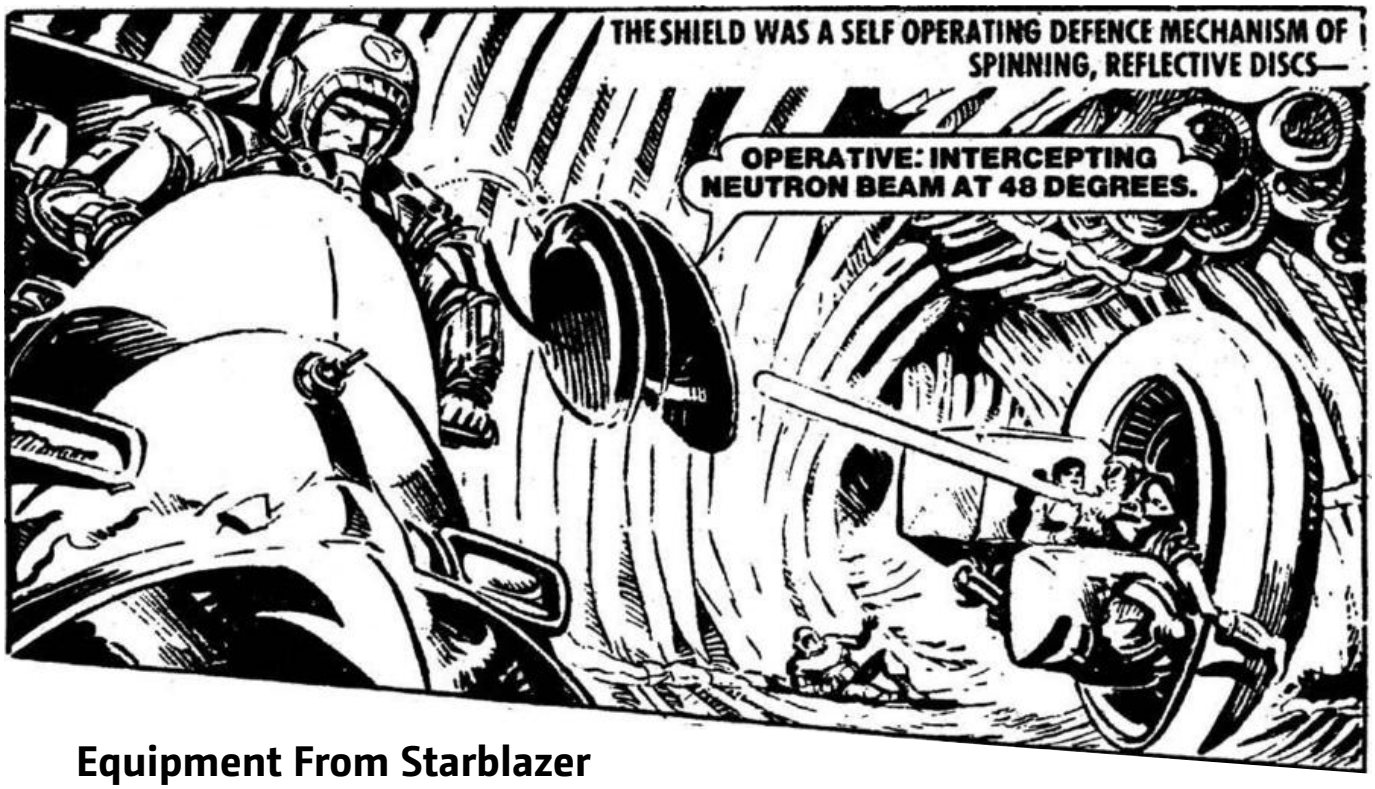
If you want to look cool for members of the opposite sex, fit in to the right scene or gang then you better be wearing the right threads. Getting a cool set of streetwear puts you in the right shoes, the right clothes, the right colours and the right graphics for today. This gives a +1 to social based Rapport skill checks with a specific type of young street crowd such as new wave rave punks, beach pop kids, moon surfer jocks, astrowave darlings, nerdcores, myface geeks – all of which change year in, year out.

Impressive suit	Great

Hot shot business tycoons look the part by wearing the latest designer suit. Whether it's a feminine or masculine piece, it's sure to make an impact. Wearing one of these adds +1 to a business based Rapport skill check once per scene

Costume outfit	Good

In the future, any kind of outfit is possible, so it's no surprise there's some pretty silly ones out there. But it's true, weird aliens with odd powers reading Earth comics seem to think it's funny running around in tight fitting brightly coloured suits or bizarre fantasy costumes shouting out 'kazam', 'avast!', bif!' or 'kapow!' in really bad accents. Not that the earth kids needed any encouragement, it's just now it seems fairly acceptable to be wearing some kind of third rated fantasy or sci-fi tv show costume cast outs. Wearing an outfit like this reduces social based Rapport skill checks by 2 with members of your own species but increases them by 2 with members of alien species who think you're 'kewl'


THE SHIELD WAS A SELF OPERATING DEFENCE MECHANISM OF SPINNING, REFLECTIVE DISCS—
OPERATIVE: INTERCEPTING NEUTRON BEAM AT 48 DEGREES.

Equipment From Starblazer

Here's a whole list of equipment and gadgets right out of the pages of ***Starblazer***, along with a little flavour text in places. As a guide to using these in your game assume that a gadget should either give a basic ability within a set circumstance, like survive in a vacuum or see in the dark or provide a plus one to a skill check once per scene.

If you are lucky enough to own any of the original ***Starblazer*** issues and find a cool piece of equipment not listed here in one of them, and would like to include it in your game, the actual usage should be determined by the Story Teller using the issues original story line as a guide (assuming the Story Teller agrees to the equipment in the first place).

There follows a simple method for estimating the cost of any piece of equipment or for items the characters suddenly feel a need to acquire.

If the equipment desired is commonly available and the character is likely to be carrying it, just allow them to have it! However if it's commonly available but not something they would usually be carrying treat its cost as Mediocre. If it's not commonly available, either compare it to something similar in one of the lists included in this chapter, or use the following guide.

Start with a basic cost of Mediocre and add or subtract the following to find the final cost, or Resource skill roll required:

- Is it related to your career? No? +1 cost
- Is it related to a skill you have? No? +1 cost
- Is it related to an Aspect or Stunt? Yes? -1 cost
- Is it restricted equipment? Yes? +2 cost
- Is it used by a specialist? Yes? +2 cost
- Is it bigger than a person? Yes? +1 cost
- Is it bigger than a truck? Yes? +1 cost
- Is it bigger than a building? Yes? +1 cost
- Is it bigger than a Scale 3 Starship? Yes? +2 cost and requires 2 x successful Resource skill checks

For items larger than this the Story Teller is encouraged to consider the cost compared to those of Starships.

The Story Teller may alter these due to circumstances or whim!

Item List

Absorbapods

thrown objects that absorb energy from a target, good for disabling robots, characters or aliens with special powers

Akorian blaster

Alloy Balloons

huge balloons towed behind tugs, the ideal means to transport volatile gases

Andromorphing chamber

Anti Matter Flare

THEY SEARCHED THE PORGANS FOR WEAPONS . . .
THIS IS THE ONLY GUN THEY HAD. IT'S NOT MUCH TO MAKE WAR ON THE PORGAN EMPIRE WITH, SHAW!
YEAH, WE NEED A BIT MORE MUSCLE.

The Aquatrain

Arches

built by the Midas club on major planets, in reality were matter receivers for the Kliphoth invasion

Athanatine

drug that can be used to extend life

Auto lock lasers

Autokey

a Fighting Scientist's device used to automatically unlock primitive doors

Automated contract killer messenger system

key in 4039 and your target details, and money is debited from your account.

Autoregister

public information terminal

Bargez armoured vehicle

about the height of a two story house; uses a combination track/wheel chassis. Top of vehicle houses a prominent turret and cannon which is a thermal lance (flamethrower)

Bargez tanks

Battle tanks

Bio sensor

can detect life forms within 25 metres.

Blast rifle

Boomers (sonic mines)

Centauri citycrusher

Cephlatron

device capable of taking the knowledge from someone's mind and leaving them a vegetable

Chemical Reaction handgun

Citus destabilisier missile

vibrates a target to pieces

Clone burst

produces many holographic copies of the user, an ideal decoy

Cobra adrenalin injector

Cobra tracking gear

Comms dish

Computer directed laser system defence

Conkuss Phaser

a stun baton

Corrodex

highly corrosive liquid

Cryo tablets

a form of medical treatment. Designed to freeze a patient's body for treatment while his mind remains active, they were used as ad-hoc weapons by the Suicide squad. Requires the use of a protective helmet by those using them so they do not get affected

Cryogenic pods

Crystalliser weapon
turns all the liquid in biological bodies into glasslike crystal

Cyber interface suit
includes pocket mainframe

The De-Corticator
a device used to makes aggressive convicts docile

The Destabilisor
a weapon that destabilises the molecular structure of its target. Mounted on the Rigel Express and invented by Gunner Gee

Desproxatril (most corrosive liquid in the universe)

Dicarbonate surgical replacement skull
Hardest substance in the galaxy, and part of Frank Carter's replacement surgery

Dilonium
valuable mineral used to power the next generation of gravity motors; extremely rare

Door cutter

The Dream Machine
extracts memories and thoughts and can also help in the creation of a robotic clone

Dreamdust
highly addictive narcotic

Duranium-525
valuable mineral

Earth mover

Electron Pistol
personal sidearm

Energy cannon

Energy Cuffs
energy beam based handcuffs used by Tara guards on the prison ship Negril

Energy Net
a form of non-lethal weapon which will hold a target in place

Exo skeleton

Firefly Grenades
issued to Galac Squad commandoes, these mobile grenades home in on light

Fisson repressor

Flaying land vehicle

Flivver
helicopter style vehicle

Fogger
a form of smoke grenade

Force Field Shell
a personal device invented by Hadron Halley; protects the wearer from adverse effects of situations like a spaceship crash

Forceshield

Gamchak
an electrically charged framework used to restrain animals

Giant particle beamer

Globules able to down a Starship by increasing its weight

Grav cart

Grav sled

Gravitator
a device that creates an opposite gravity field

Gravity focus belt
Fi-Sci invention allowing teleportation

Gravity neutralisers

Gravshutes
a form of parachute using anti gravity technology designed to bring its user to the surface of a planet smoothly

Gun barge

Hand Held Particle Beam

Hologra-Image
a holographic decoy meant to fool enemies

Holograms

Hover tractor

Hoverbike

Hovspotter
small lightly armoured hover vehicle used by the Bargez, commandeered by Gee to help lead a prison break out

Hydrogen bolts
weapon capable of freezing an enemy

Illusion Suit
projects short term disguise

Implosion grenade

Jet Belt
Mind Lord device that allows the user to hover

Jet pack

Jitter Bomb
self steering defensive weapon on Planet Tamers sled

Kayn's Glasses
Kayn's new glasses provided by Pop Perz; they allow him to see in infra red, and also have an x-ray function

Kayn's Comp
Kayn's household computer, able to have its memory module transferred to Kayns ship

Kinetronic Beam projector
weapon that was to have armed a defence post

Landing capsule

Laser axe

Laser barbed wire

Laser booster

Laser cannon ground weapon

Laser Harness
mounted on Bo Kretch's vehicle, it is a projectile weapon capable of grabbing hold of someone and imprisoning them.

Laser knife

Laser Lance

Laser miner

Laserpoon
a spaceborne harpoon

Las-Shield

Lattice laser rope
a laser 'fence' set up as a net

Laz Sword
energised melee weapon

Lectrolok ray used to disable circuitry

Life line gun

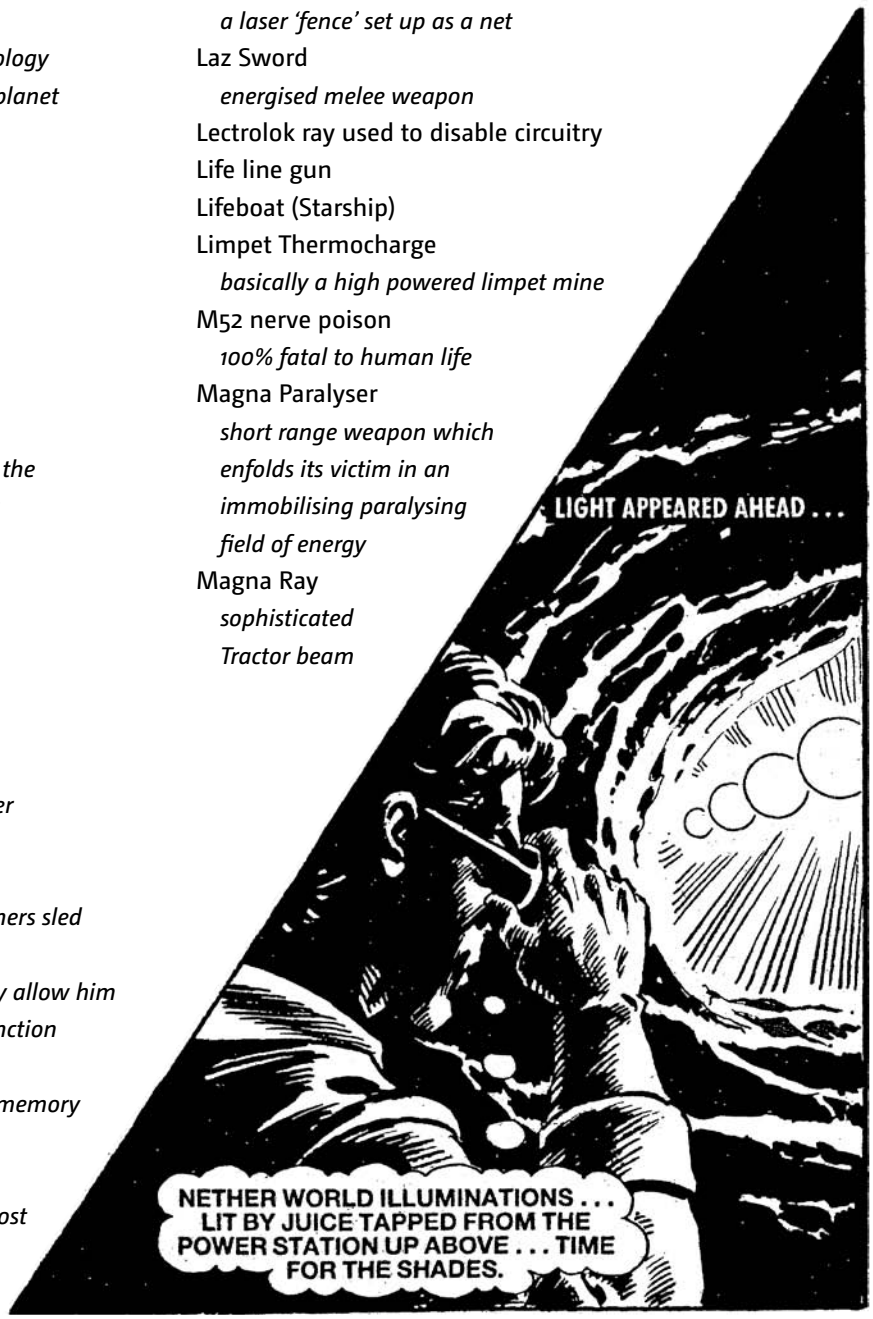
Lifeboat (Starship)

Limpet Thermocharge
basically a high powered limpet mine

M52 nerve poison
100% fatal to human life

Magna Paralyser
short range weapon which enfolds its victim in an immobilising paralysing field of energy

Magna Ray
sophisticated Tractor beam


LIGHT APPEARED AHEAD . . .
NETHER WORLD ILLUMINATIONS . . . LIT BY JUICE TAPPED FROM THE POWER STATION UP ABOVE . . . TIME FOR THE SHADES.

Magnetic climbing clamps

Magnon blaster rifle

Magnotron-B

a valuable mineral

Maladium

rare metal forbidden outside of Thalia. Beautiful and deadly melee weapons are made from it

Mark 6b Mesom blaster

Mark 9 Energy Pistol

powerful firearm used by Franky Nova

Mark IV Photon blaster

rifle-style weapon; computer assisted aiming makes it possible to quickly kill multiple opponents

Matter Condensor

used on Mynos prison planet. It can effectively shrink a cargo to a fraction of its normal size enabling a small freighter to carry much more. On planet Tara the process is reversed.

Matter Converter

when linked with a blaster cartridge it was used to destroy the Slaughter Mek

Matter transmitter energy beams

teleports star freighters from station to station

Matter transmitter

'transporter' that has only been tested with androids, not living matter

Mesmer Bomb

grenade style weapon which paralyses the central nervous system

Meson Blaster

non regulation weapon

Metabolic Decelerator

grenade style weapon that slows the metabolic rate of its to a minimum

Mind Control helmets

developed by the Mind Lords

Miniwelder

a tool that can be easily concealed and used as an improvised weapon

The Molfaan

an alien artefact supposedly filled with a race's entire knowledge that a Dyadassi can bond with

Momentum battery

Needlebeam

police issue laser weapon; has a kill setting and one that affects the target's central nervous system; the 'stun' setting takes longer to work

Nervo Stun

weapon that can paralyse the central nervous system

Neutraliser

a gadget belonging to Varley that defeated a security system of alarm beams at a waterfall.

JUBAL MCKAY HAD BUILT-IN WEAPONRY, RADIO AND TRACKING FACILITIES, THE ABILITY TO SEAL THE MOUTH AND NOSTRILS AND BREATHE COMPRESSED AIR FROM INTERNAL TANKS—ENABLING TOTALLY FREE MOVEMENT IN SPACE . . .
THERE IS ALSO A SOCKET IN THE ARM TO ENABLE YOU TO PLUG INTO, AND TO REMOTELY CONTROL MOST STANDARD TYPES OF COMPUTER.
NOW I NEED JUST ONE MORE THING TO BE COMPLETE.

Neutron beamer in Nightraider's arm

Octo-Restrainer
a police 'web gun' used to catch and restrain criminals

P30M-90
extremely potent truth drug

P47 Temporal Warper
A device that can temporarily alter the molecular structure of an area

Pain Stick
portable weapon capable of inflicting great pain

Paraglider
a form of combination parachute/hang glider

Pentathax
truth drug

Permaflex body armour
worn by Frank Carter

Permflex body armour
allows the wearer to take a direct shot to the chest and survive

Personal Energy shield
protects the wearer from blows

Phaser
personal sidearm of the admiral of the Free Spacers

Photon Blaster
short range weapon built into Planet Tamer's arm

Photon tank
tank with nuclear torpedoes

Photonascender
gun style device that fires a grapple hook and net enabling people to climb

Planet Tamer's sled
powerful solo space bike packed with weapons and gadgets. Owned by legendary mercenary Planet Tamer

Plasma Cannon

Plasma Gel
substance capable of blocking jet packs

Plas-zookas

Pods
Bargez atmospheric patrol fighters

Police Issue Photon pistol
standard police sidearm. Its design, substantial size as well as its destructive power make it well known to criminals

Police Riot control vehicle
Lightly armed wheeled scout vehicle

Porgan robo tracker

Power armour
exoskeleton power armour

Presley's walking stick
Conceals a weapon that fires a sliver of dry ice that melts upon contact with the victim; it leaves no trace of the wound or what caused it. Also concealed in an otherwise standard item

Protector personal shield

Proton charges
explosives with neutron detonators
Radar Guided Thermowave
a Fi-Sci weapon which locks onto its target and only detonates at a particular range; in the case of Tarb's defences, it penetrated the palace walls before destroying the defence generator
Reflective armour
Reflector
a dish-like defensive/offensive weapon; amplifies and reflects enemy fire
Reproductor
a holographic device used to produce hologram replicas of items as large as starships
Retinal Laser
Riot Quell dart
a tranquiliser dart
Robot detector
Robotic tug
Sabun Gas bomb
deadly nerve gas grenade
Sand Dweller weapon
sonic based
Scout Drone
a part of a Warwagon, it is essentially a UAV disguised as a local lifeform so as not to attract attention. Capable of voice communication with the vehicle
Scout hopper
Sensor shrouds
Shiver-Stick
vibration based weapon shaped like a hockey stick. Contact causes instant death
Shok-Stick
blunt weapon built to stun targets but carries enough electricity to kill
Siege Stunner
Vehicle mounted weapon that fires a sound based projectile that can knock people unconscious
Slammer
nuclear powered thermic drill; beam can be wide enough to span a city
Slaughter Mek
Slave Collar
contains a means for Kretch to use variable pain settings to punish those who disobey him
Sled
Small flyer
SMART (Sensor Motion and Reactive Targeting) missile
capable of dodging anti-missile countermeasures
Soft Ray
one of the Planet Tamer's devices; changes the composition of materials. In the case of the Aquatrain enabled him to enter the train without affecting the integrity of its hull
Sonic Beamer
medium sized weapon
Sonic grenade
sound based weapon which can also be fatal
Sonic Grenades
Sonic sabre
Sonic Scrambler
sound based weapon
Space bug
Space sled
Spaceport recorder
logs and videographs every visitor so it is easy to check whether someone has visited recently
Spacescooter
Spearguns
Operated by compressed gas
Spoke bombs
droppable space born bombs
Spyder robot guard
Starship Sanction device
ship mounted device capable of destroying all life on a planet
Starship "Crippler"
a ranged weapon which can knock out a ship's power unit
Starship DSM-6 AKA Destroyer Speedmissile mark 6
A weapon typically carried on larger Terran craft
Starship Electro Missiles
releases Neutron rays which kill the crew of a ship but leave the ship intact
Starship electron web
Starship Energy flares
able to disable a Starship
Starship fissile beam
Starship fission cannon
Starship Heat-Seeking Warp Torpedo
anti ship weapon
Starship irradiation beam
Starship laser battery
Starship Magnetron
ship mounted force field that pushes away asteroids

Starship magnon beam
Starship Micro-moonsplitter
weapon that can shatter asteroids and small planetary bodies
Starship Neuroweb
navigation system
Starship neutron bomb
Starship Neutron Warheads
highly explosive missiles
Starship Nimbus Cloud
Leonotus's weapon that deflects an attacker's energy back at itself; also makes his ship immune to the Cirrus beam used so effectively on the palace
Starship Omega Computer
onboard the ship that Alta captured, it enabled him to navigate a quick course to Weaponworld and to bypass the force field
Starship phaser cannon
Starship plasma bombs
Starship plasma cannon
Starship plasma mines
Starship plasma ray
Starship Plasma torpedoes
Starship proton bombs
Starship Proton torpedoes
highly dangerous and destructive space to ground and space to space weapons. More useful against large capital ships, bases or fixed ground targets
Starship psionic bomb
Starship pulsar cannon
Starship Rime Ray
weapon which freezes the target; mounted on top line UPO ships
Starship robot torpedoes
Starship scatter beam
Starship Spacecannon Platforms
huge asteroids made from multiple asteroids fused together. Each is armed with massive weapons and the power of half a Shabot fleet group

THE SONIC SABRE WAS A WEAPON OF AXEL'S OWN DESIGN. IT HAD A GENERATOR BUILT INTO ITS HANDLE WHICH PRODUCED A CONTROLLED AREA OF SONIC VIBRATION. IT COULD SLICE THROUGH ANY KNOWN MATERIAL.
THE FIRST PERSON TO TAKE ONE STEP FORWARD GETS SLICED IN HALF!

Starship Starwinder Missiles
anti ship missiles carried on board the Braddock and other similar Galac Squad ships
Starship Temporal Phase Disruptor
Ranged weapon which literally freezes its target in time; capable of being used on targets as large as a space station
Starship Vega Phaser
Starship Warp Cannon
Starship Warp Torpedo
anti ship weapon on the Planet Tamer's sled
Starship Weapons satellite
Sunburst Bomb
extremely bright form of Flash/bang style weapon
Synthiskin
synthetic skin used in bionic augmentations
Syran Ornocraft
ancient winged starcraft of the Syran race
Syran suspended animation pods
Thermal knife
Thermal Missile
mounted on moloks fighter; heat based weapon
Thermite device
Fire bomb
Thermo nuclear disintegrator
Thermon Bomb
Trans-Mat
a means of sending items through a teleporter style device. A built in failsafe allegedly stops a unit from receiving if the sender unit is not calibrated properly
Transpex
window material on Kayn's 30th floor apartment, meant to be unbreakable
Transport bubble
Tranuranic Core
Deltan's core is a thousand times more valuable than gold
Traven's suit
holds his anti-energy form together
Troop Transporter
Truth meter
Truth Sensors
LEO 'Law Enforcement Officer' lie detectors, though according to Frank Carter they take too long to work
Trynithian
a slow acting poison
Ultrasonic sound generator
a device that emits a high pitched tone. Affects animals and also Carter's ears due to his high audio sensitivity
Varlock blaster
Vortex Ray
a weapon that can pull its victims apart
Wave Amplifier
device that Shade invented to enable communication with the Starhammer asteroids.
Wide beamer gun
Wrist vis-phone
With some engineering creativity can create a nerve torturing blast of sonic vibrations
Ziegler's Flyer
armed with a self defence laser cannon

Services

Access to Skills

There are plenty of experts out there ready to sell their services for those willing to pay. This is useful if the characters would like to consult with a top academic consultant, researcher, scientist or another highly skilled individual when they do not have any suitable contacts.

The cost of hiring the specialist for a defined project is a Resource skill check with the difficulty being the desired skill level of the support. If the skill check fails the characters do not find the right person in that location and must try elsewhere. Success on the Resource skill check allows the characters to make one skill check with the hired skill, which the characters may use Fate points to improve as usual. A failure means the expert is unable to help them.

Medical Aid

If characters need to get healing fast they can visit a medical facility. The facility the players attend for healing must have a skill level at the same level of the cost of the medical aid required.

Aid Required	Cost
Restoring character from Extreme consequence to full health in a month	Fantastic
Restoring character from Severe consequence to full health in a week	Great
Restoring character from Major consequence to full health in a day	Fair
Restoring character from Minor consequence to full health in an hour	Mediocre
Curing Disease or poison	the power of the disease or poison is the cost

Transport

Here's the cost of public transport per person to various distances. Increase the cost by +3 if you want private transport, one way.

Cost	Distance
Average	Anywhere within the current system
Fair	Any neighbouring star system
Good	Several star systems away
Great	Halfway across the current galaxy
Superb	Anywhere in the current galaxy
Fantastic	Any neighbouring galaxy
Epic	Up to several galaxies away
Legendary	Any point in the known Universe

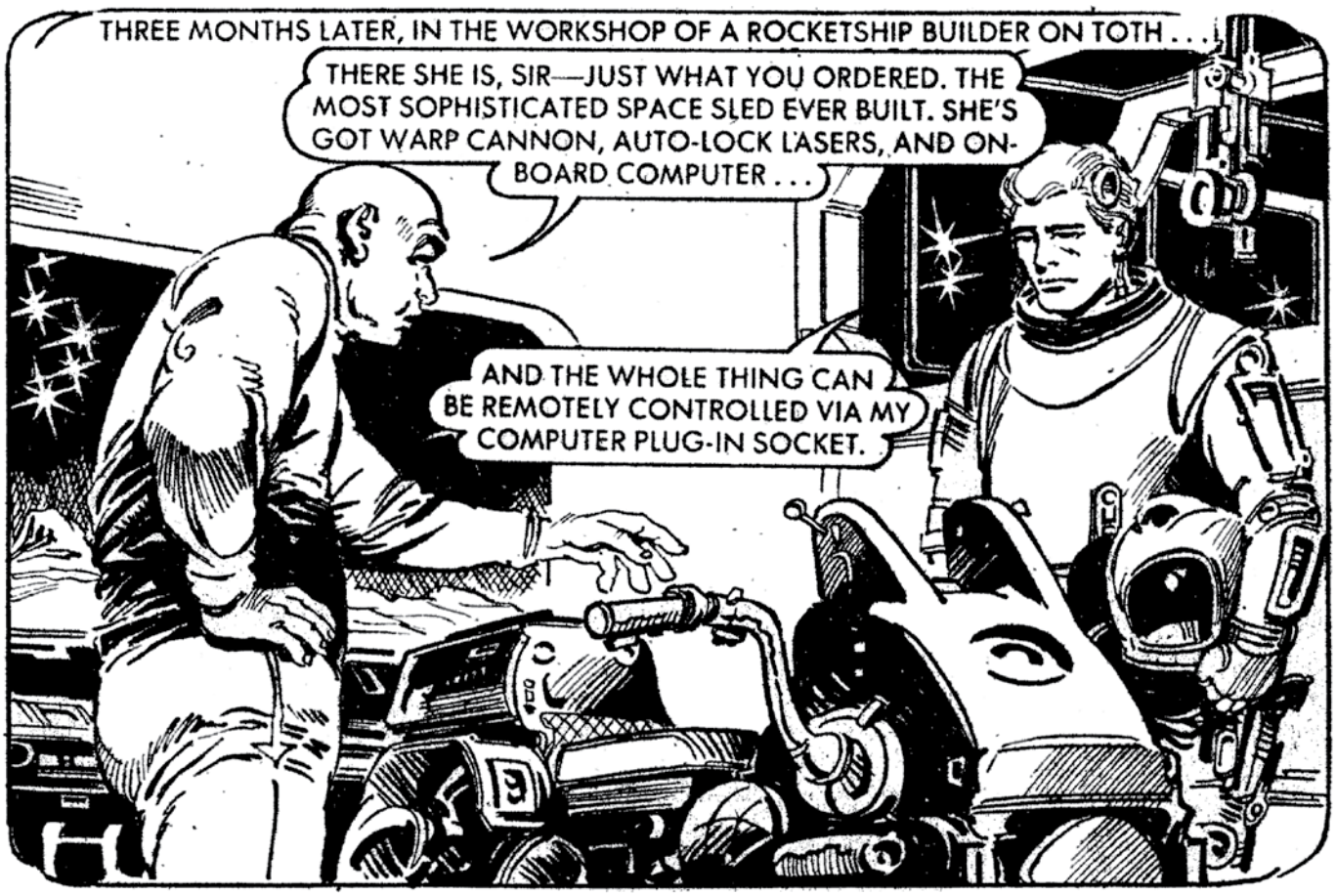
Gadgetry

Making Things

Space opera is the realm of fantastic gadgets and science that finds new and inventive ways to solve problems. In Starblazer Adventures, Engineers are capable of improving or customizing all manner of devices. Of course, they're also capable of causing otherwise innocuous devices to explode messily! Rather than using the Resources skill to buy items, they retreat into their workshops and use the tools and materials they have there to invent and build those items using the Engineering skill.

Building something from scratch is based off a difficulty equal to the cost of the item in question (page 58). For example, building an Energy Pistol (+4) from scratch has a Superb difficulty, due to the gun's Superb cost. It also requires appropriate tools, supplies and time. Tools and supplies are measured by the quality of the engineer's workshop, which must be at least as high as the item's quality (which is equal to the cost). To build an Energy Pistol (Superb cost and, thus, Superb item quality), the character must have a Superb or better workshop. If an item is restricted it means the parts are likely to be restricted as well. The character should have either access via a career to a supplier or an Aspect which would give a plausible reason why he would have access to the parts or raw materials required.

Building something is time consuming, taking at least a day per level of item quality over Mediocre


THREE MONTHS LATER, IN THE WORKSHOP OF A ROCKETSHIP BUILDER ON TOTH . . .
THERE SHE IS, SIR—JUST WHAT YOU ORDERED. THE MOST SOPHISTICATED SPACE SLED EVER BUILT. SHE'S GOT WARP CANNON, AUTO-LOCK LASERS, AND ON-BOARD COMPUTER . . .
AND THE WHOLE THING CAN BE REMOTELY CONTROLLED VIA MY COMPUTER PLUG-IN SOCKET.

(minimum of one day), so it's assumed that characters will only be building things that they can't buy or acquire otherwise. More often, it's assumed they will skip the time to build the base item, and instead start with something that already exists and then improve it.

Improving Things

Engineers can tinker to improve or change the workings of any device. There is an array of possible improvements, which include:

Additional Capability

The device can now do something else of roughly the same scale. A car might also be able to be a boat, for example, or a gun might be able to shoot a grappling hook. Alternately, it may be able to do something normal but do it exceptionally well.

Alternate Usage [1]

The device allows skills to be used differently. For example, a ghost detector might allow a Scientist to use Science rather than Mysteries for the Sixth Sense effect.

Armed

Adds guns or blades to a device that would not normally have them, allowing its use with the Guns or Weapons skill. Each Armed improvement adds +1 to stress damage on a successful hit.

Armoured

A device may be given a point of armor, meaning that any time it is hit the armour absorbs the first point of stress damage. Can only be purchased a maximum of three times.

Alien Technology [2]

Requires "Weird Science" stunt or co-inventor. The device can include an alien technological advance that provides an unusual effect such as being a machine – organic fusion or being a sentient device.

Magic Tech

Requires "Mad Science" stunt or co-inventor. Not just alien, this is so advanced it seems like magic.

AI Control

The device has some manner of AI control or autopilot and is able to act independently in a very limited fashion.

Conscious

Like independent, but the device is capable of basic reasoning, and can interpret simple commands.

Hair Trigger

This is mostly only applicable to explosives. A bomb with a hair trigger has no delay – it blows up as soon as it's thrown. The bad news is that Hair Triggers can be a bit tricky, and there's a chance of it blowing up in your hand. Failing the throw means that it explodes at the thrower's feet! Also, if a character carrying a hair trigger device takes any physical stress or consequences, he must roll the dice, and on a minus number, it explodes.

Miniaturization

Something that's not normally portable can now fit in a large set of luggage, while something merely large can now fit in a wristwatch.

Maximization

The inverse of miniaturization: Sometimes you just need something to be BIG! This improvement is used to alter an item for circumstances when size will truly matter, such as a weapon that can't possibly damage its intended mega-monster target without being very large, or a car that's actually house-sized and able to transport a huge number of passengers. This effectively allows the object to interact with objects up to 3 scales larger rather than just two.

Craftsmanship

The device gives a +1 bonus to any effort using it (usually only to one skill, if the device supports the use of multiple skills). This improvement may not be taken more than once per affected skill.

Rugged

The device has 2 extra boxes of stress capacity over the default. May be taken multiple times.

Special Effect

A device may now operate on different principles. The game benefit of this will depend highly on the specifics.

Upgrade

A specific improvement, granting a +2 bonus to some fairly specific use for the thing. A vehicle, for example, might get a +2 to manoeuvre actions in a swamp or a +2 on a highway.

To improve an item (rather than create it from scratch), start with the base difficulty to create the device based on the item's Difficulty to Acquire, as before.

Next, determine how many improvements you want to make. Each improvement increases the difficulty (and required workshop quality) by one. Each improvement takes approximately 8 hours to implement.

If the player is willing to increase total time to improve the item by one increment on the time table (page 237), he gains a +1 bonus to the roll; increasing

it again results in a +2 bonus, and so forth. This bonus doesn't reduce the requirements for the workshop, however; that's still based on the quality of the item (and thus the difficulty target). The player may also reduce the time spent; if less total time is spent improving the item, each step faster on the time table imposes a -1 penalty to the roll. Failure on the roll is subject to the rules for "taking your time" (page 238) in order to retroactively succeed.

Personal Things

Characters are able to buy **personal gadgets** as stunts (see Chapter 8). Gadgets bought this way generally start from a baseline item of any sort, with three improvements applied. Cost factors are set aside since the gadget is getting "paid for" in terms of stunts. Alternately, the player can take multiple devices and spread those three improvements among them. The Story Teller and player may work together to create new improvements that fit the concept of the gadget.

Personal gadgets can be taken away, destroyed or lost over the course of an adventure unless the character also has an Aspect for the gadget. However, the Story Teller should assume that the character recovers or replaces the device between adventures. If the character has an Aspect for the gadget, the Story Teller may, at his discretion, allow the player to invoke the gadget's Aspect to make a declaration that he's recovered the device fortuitously during the course of play. Gadgets that are tied to Aspects in this way become central to the character's story and, as such, should never be taken away from the character for too long.

Personal gadgets can use improvements which require weird science. If the player does not have the Weird Science stunt, he must apply "Uses Weird Science" (at the cost of one improvement) before applying the weird improvements themselves (so a device may have two weird improvements for a total cost of three improvements).

Personal gadgets can also use improvements which require mad science, subject to much stronger Story Teller scrutiny. If the player does not have the Mad Science stunt, he must apply "Uses Mad Science" (at the cost of two improvements) before applying mad science improvements.

Universal Gadgets

Characters can also take unspecified gadgets as stunts. This is useful for characters who are likely to carry around a variety of gadgets and need to pull out just the right thing for the occasion. These sorts of gadgets are called universal gadgets.

When a character begins an adventure, his gadget doesn't need to be defined. Instead, at the point where he decides he needs it, he reveals the device, which can have two improvements. If a character has multiple stunts, they can combine them to make one gadget with many improvements. Once the character has declared the gadget, he has it for the rest of the adventure.

If the character wishes to introduce something a little more dramatic, he may instead introduce a wonderful toy.

Wonderful Toys – Gadgets as Effects

Sometimes a gadget is a "fast forward" button that, when used, effectively allows the characters to skip to the end of a scene, perhaps by being exactly the right thing to get past a lock, or releasing gas at just the right time to incapacitate the guards.

UNTIL—
SYSTEMS MISFUNCTION — ALL MOTIVE UNITS SHUTTING DOWN TILL FOREIGN SUBSTANCE CAN BE EXPELLED . . .
NO! NO! I BUILT YOU! STAY ON LINE! STAY ON LINE!

Instead of pulling out a device with improvements, an unspecified gadget can be used for a specific effect, which is usually enough to simply bypass any challenge, or at least radically redefine it. This is a one-shot effect, trading off a more potent effect for being able to use it only once. These effects are always subject to Story Teller veto.

Buying Gadgets Outright

While the difficulty of acquiring normal items can be found elsewhere (see

page 58), sometimes a particularly rich individual is interested in purchasing something a little bit more custom for himself. Buying an item with upgrades requires two things: finding someone willing to sell, and shelling out the cash.

The difficulty for finding a seller is a Contacting contest with a difficulty equal to the difficulty of improving the item. This will take one day, +1 day per upgrade. Shifts generated on the Contacting roll may be spent to reduce the timeframe as usual (four shifts make it just half an hour).

Once a seller has been found, the base price of the item is equal to the cost of the base item, +2 per upgrade.

Artefacts

Artefacts are devices that work on different principals than traditional science. Artefacts use many of the same rules as gadgets, but with a few exceptions. Visually, artefacts are rarely subtle – they are covered in arcane runes or alien sygils, and their use is definitely likely to raise eyebrows.

Making and Improving Artefacts

The base quality of an artefact is at least Good, reflecting the strange and curious materials such things must be made from. An artefact may be upgraded with many of the same upgrades as gadgets, excepting *futurization* or *hair trigger*.

That said, there are a small number of upgrades that are only available for artefacts:

Arcane

This does not actually do anything, except it makes whatever else the artefact does into a magical effect. There are situations where this will be quite useful, such as when the Story Teller throws in some aliens who can't be permanently killed without special powers.

Blessed

The Story Teller should consider what restrictions he puts on this – an artificer should also be a holy man of some sort, like a priest. This is very much like the Arcane modifier, except the things that respond to it (such as unholy creatures) may be a little different.

Alien

The artefact is built using alien weird science, and works on perhaps wildly different principles. Whilst the effect is pretty much the same, this may be enough to bypass a target's invulnerability.

An artefact can use effects that would normally require Weird Science without an appropriate stunt, but it means that there is a potential complication. It may mean that Elder Things are tied into it, or it may have bizarre side effects. For example, the artefact version of "conscious" might mean the artefact has a quirky personality, or it might have the potential to become truly self aware and a danger to all those around it.

Conscious Artefacts

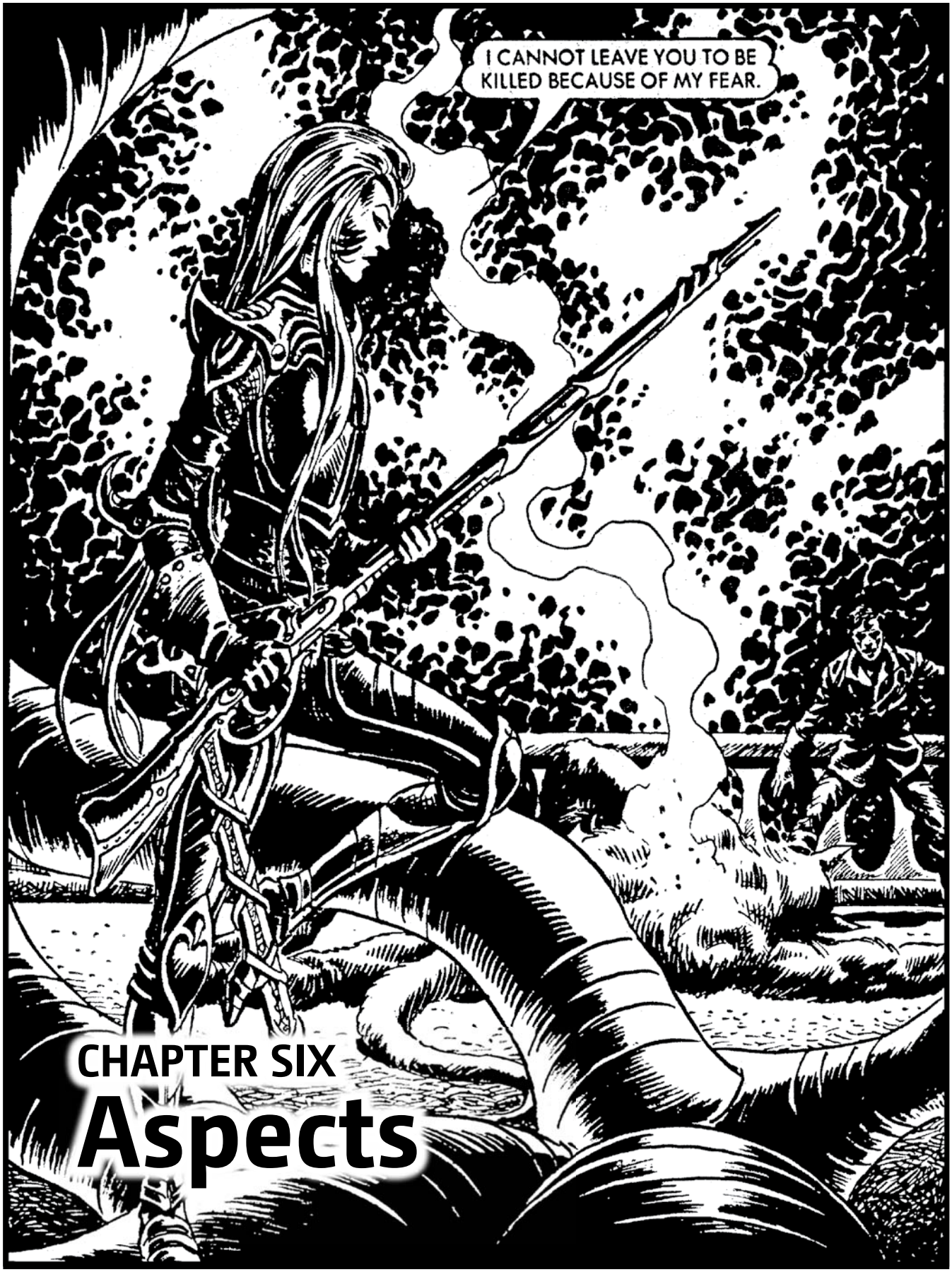
Particularly powerful ancient artefacts or those from even more advanced civilisations may have artificial intelligence or very bizarre powers. They could appear to be 'magic' when they are used by their owner. Many artifacts have a "personality" that has an effect on the owner over time, for better or worse.

Consider giving these artefacts a couple of Aspects describing their attitude and effect on those who use the equipment. Using this you can model artefacts that might be cursed. For example the Demon Sword is prophesied to lead it's bearer to ultimate victory but they are also cursed to die by the sword. What might be an 'evil' alien ship could give all the crew the Aspect 'aggressive'. This Aspect can then be compelled by the Story Teller, encouraging and rewarding the players for acting out the effect of the artefact on their characters.

Personal Artefacts & Rare Artefacts

Personal artefacts (page 175) function pretty much the same way as personal gadgets, and effectively use the same rules. However, artefacts can use weird science or mad science improvements without an appropriate stunt (and without the additional cost that's applied to gadgets), but such effects are subject to complications (see above).

Multiple personal artefact stunts can't be combined into the same artefact – for that, you need a rare artefact. Rare artefacts work like universal gadgets, in that they can be defined on the fly, but they have three improvements instead of two and a guarantee that they fall under the "potential complication" effect from above. This is reinforced by the idea that, when the character reveals a rare artefact, he may take a temporary Aspect to represent the complication (see the Rare Artefact stunt on page 176 for more).



CHAPTER SIX
Aspects

Aspects

Characters have a set of attributes called **Aspects**. Aspects cover a wide range of elements and should collectively paint a picture of who the character is, what he's connected to, and what's important to him (in contrast to the "what can he do" of Skills).

Aspects can be relationships, beliefs, catchphrases, quotes, descriptors, items or pretty much anything else that describes the character. Some possible Aspects are shown here.

Sample Aspects

- Quick Witted
- Sucker For A Pretty Face
- Survivor Of The Mary Lee Crash
- Star Of The Long Running Super Family TV Show
- Stubborn As A Centaurian Bull
- Girl In Every Starport
- You'll Never Take Me Alive!
- Born With A Silver Spoon
- First On The Scene
- Big Man In Town
- Honest Joe
- Scottish Engineer

For more examples see the Aspects list starting on page 89. An Aspect can be used to give you a bonus when it applies to a situation. Doing this requires spending a Fate point (see Chapter 9). In this capacity, called **invoking an Aspect**, it makes the character better at whatever it is he's doing, because the Aspect in some way applies to the situation (such as 'Heart-throb' when trying to charm a girl).

An Aspect can also allow you to gain more Fate points, by bringing complications and troubling circumstances into the character's life. Whenever you end up in a situation where your Aspect could cause you trouble (such as 'Stubborn' when trying to be diplomatic), you can mention it to the Story Teller in the same way you mention an Aspect that might help you. Alternatively, the Story Teller may initiate this event if one of your Aspects seems particularly apt. In either of these two cases, this is called **compelling an Aspect**, the effect of which is to limit your character's choices in some way. If the Story Teller initiates or agrees to compel the Aspect, you may get one or more Fate points, depending on how it plays out.

Picking Character Aspects

More than anything else, Aspects are a player's most explicit way of telling the Story Teller, "This is the stuff I want to see in the game". If the player picks an Aspect like 'Death-Defying', then he should be able to fully expect that the Story Teller will put him in death-defying situations. Story Tellers should want players to use their Aspects; players should pick the ones they want to use, and Story Tellers should encourage them to choose Aspects that will be both interesting and useful.

Once a player decides on an idea for an Aspect, he needs to figure out what Aspect name best describes what he intends; there are usually many possible names for a desired Aspect, which can make this choice somewhat difficult. However, most of the time, an Aspect is going to be a **phrase**, a **person** or a **prop**.

A **phrase** can be anything from a descriptive phrase ('Strong As An Ox') to a simple descriptor ('Strong'), or even a literal quote ('No One Is Stronger Than A Mandroid!'). Phrase Aspects come into play based on how well the situation matches them; a colourful phrase adds a lot of flavour and innately suggests several different ways to use it. This potentially makes phrase Aspects some of the most flexible Aspects in the game.

A **person** can be anyone important to the character. A friend, an enemy, a family member, a sidekick, a mentor – as long as someone matters to the character, he makes an appropriate Aspect. A person Aspect is most easily used when that person is in the scene with the character, but the Aspect can come up in other ways, depending upon the person's history and relationship with the character. For example, if a character has his mentor as an Aspect, that Aspect might be useful for things his mentor would have instructed him on.

Props are things, places or even ideas – anything external to the character that isn't a person. A prop can be useful if it's something the character has with him, or if it's the crux of a conflict, but it may also imply things about the character, or even be useful in its absence (if only I had my 'Trusty Toolbox'!).

These three categories of Aspects aren't hard and fast. An Aspect like 'Captain Carter Needs Us *Now*!' has elements of both a phrase and a person, and that's just fine. We've just provided these categories to help provide a way to think about how to frame Aspects.

Why would I want a bad Aspect?

You may have noticed that a number of the Aspects throughout this book are "bad" Aspects – they indicate a downside for a character, either in their directly negative connotations, or in their two-edged nature. Aspects like 'Drunkard', 'Sucker', 'Stubborn', and 'Honest' all suggest situations where the character will have to behave a certain way – making an ass of himself at an important social function, falling for a line of bull, failing to back down when it's important to do so, or speaking truth when truth is the path to greatest harm.

So why put such Aspects on your sheet if they're only going to make trouble for you? Simple: you want that kind of trouble.

On a basic, game-rules footing, "bad" Aspects are a direct line to getting you more Fate points – and Fate points are the electricity that powers some of the more potent *positive* uses of your Aspects. We'll get more into how Aspects can generate and use Fate points later on in this chapter.

Outside of just the rules, a "bad" Aspect adds interest and story to a character in a way that purely positive Aspects cannot. This sort of interest means time in the limelight. If someone's trying to take advantage of the fact your character's a 'Sucker', that's an important point in the story, and the camera's going to focus on it. "Bad" Aspects also immediately suggest story to your Story Teller; they tell her how to hook your character in. From the perspective of playing the game to get involved and have fun, there's nothing but good in this sort of "bad".

Clever players will also find positive ways to use "bad" Aspects. The 'Drunkard' might get looked over more easily by prying eyes as "just a drunk"; someone who's Stubborn will be more determined to achieve his goals. This brings us the "secret" truth about Aspects: the ones that are most useful are the ones that are the most *interesting*. And *interesting* comes most strongly from Aspects that are *neither* purely good nor purely bad.

As a rule of thumb, when picking an Aspect, think of three situations where you can see the Aspect coming into play. If you've got one reasonably positive situation and one reasonably negative situation out of that set, you're golden! If they're all of one type, you may want to reconsider how you've worded your Aspect – try to put a little of what's missing in there. Ultimately, though, one Aspect that's "all good" or "all bad" isn't that much of a problem, so long as you have a good mix throughout your whole set.

Jazzing it up

Aspects are one of the major sources of flavour for your character; they're the first thing a Story Teller will look at on your sheet when trying to work out what sort of stories to throw you into. This is powerful juju, and the best part is, you are in *total* control of it with the words you choose for your Aspect.

Whenever you're writing down the name of an Aspect, ask yourself, "how much flavour does this Aspect suggest?" If it seems fairly colourless, then you might well be off the mark, and it's time to kick it up a notch. Certainly, don't feel like you have to do this with every Aspect you take, but if your character is served up as a bland dish, you may discover that your Story Teller is at loose ends for keeping him involved in the story.

For a few "good – better – best" ideas, look at this trio of examples.

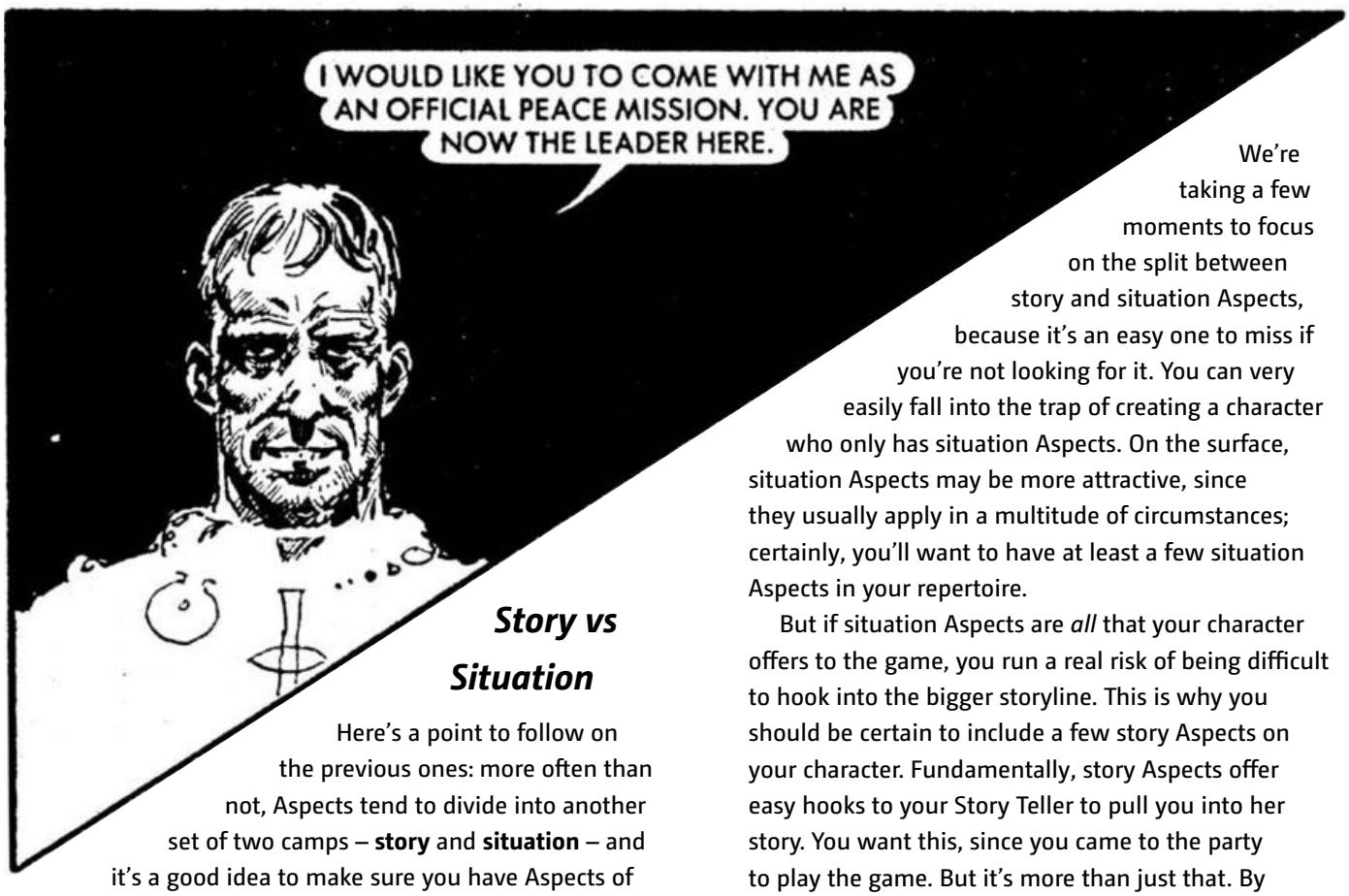
THE COMPUTER CHATTERED TO A HALT, SCARED SPEECHLESS! ME, I WASN'T SCARED. PETRIFIED WAS A MORE ACCURATE DESCRIPTION.
HELLLLP!

CARTER ADVANCED ON A SEETHING MASS OF MARSHRATS . . .
I WAS ONCE THE MANDROID COP . . . PART MACHINE, PART HUMAN. BUT I LOST MY HUMANITY WHEN LAURA DIED. NOW ONLY THE UNFEELING MACHINE REMAINS.

Bland	**Tasty**	**Bam!**
Strong	Strong As Steel	I Am Mandroid!
Dark Past	Former Cultist	Centaurian Star Cultist
Sniper	Trained Sniper	Trained By Colonel 'One Shot' Carter

In each of these cases, the "bland" option certainly suggests its uses, but doesn't really jump off the page as something that suggests story. The "tasty" option is certainly better by dint of being more specific; both Story Teller and player can see some potential story hooks in these, and they serve to differentiate themselves interestingly from their blander predecessors. But the "bam!" options are where it's at.

'Mandroid' could easily be the phrase others use to identify the character, and suggests more applications than simple strength or android replacement parts. 'Centaurian Star Cultist' names the cult the character was once a part of, sends the Story Teller looking to the various Starblazer legends dealing with secret organisations for some plot ideas, and starts to put some NPCs onto the map. 'Trained By Colonel 'One Shot' Carter' gives the player plenty of opportunity for flashbacks to his time with Carter, which may include lessons and history that don't *just* have to do with the army or rifle training, and also hints at the possibility of Carter himself showing up in a story down the line. So when you pick an Aspect, ask yourself: is this bland, is this tasty, or is this "bam!"?



Story vs Situation

Here's a point to follow on the previous ones: more often than not, Aspects tend to divide into another set of two camps – **story** and **situation** – and it's a good idea to make sure you have Aspects of each type.

Story Aspects suggest one or more sources for stories involving the character, by bringing in an external element from the world at large. People and prop Aspects are almost exclusively story Aspects. Phrase Aspects *might* be story Aspects, but if they are, it's usually because they mix in some elements of the other two Ps. You can most easily identify a story Aspect by asking yourself if the Aspect, independent of the character, is something other characters might interact with, affect, and change. Strange cults, ancient artifacts, evil aliens, hidden lairs, alien worlds, spouses, and more, all fit into this category.

Situation Aspects suggest the *kind* of situations a character might be in much more than they suggest the *origin* of those situations. Phrase Aspects fall strongly into this camp, and they operate as a statement to the Story Teller of the style of stories the player wants his character to be in. Phrase Aspects like 'Nick Of Time', 'Stubborn As A Centaurian Bull', and 'Last Man Standing' all suggest vivid situations – ones which should rightly repeat themselves over the course of playing the character – but don't really suggest the *context* of those situations.

We're taking a few moments to focus on the split between story and situation Aspects, because it's an easy one to miss if you're not looking for it. You can very easily fall into the trap of creating a character who only has situation Aspects. On the surface, situation Aspects may be more attractive, since they usually apply in a multitude of circumstances; certainly, you'll want to have at least a few situation Aspects in your repertoire.

But if situation Aspects are *all* that your character offers to the game, you run a real risk of being difficult to hook into the bigger storyline. This is why you should be certain to include a few story Aspects on your character. Fundamentally, story Aspects offer easy hooks to your Story Teller to pull you into her story. You want this, since you came to the party to play the game. But it's more than just that. By providing story Aspects, you've provided some things which exist separately from your character. At the core of it, this means you've helped to build the game world. You've got ownership and stakes in the bigger picture. The Story Teller will be grateful to you for it, and that kind of gratitude pays out in the form of a more satisfying game.

Getting on the same page

You may have noticed that, so far, we're using a lot of ink to talk about how your Aspects communicate things about your character to the Story Teller. We mean it. Out of all the things in the game, Aspects are probably the clearest message you can send to the Story Teller about what you want from the game, short of walking right up to the Story Teller and saying so. Also, in all likelihood, the Story Teller is going to have copies of your character sheets when you're not around, so the Aspects you've picked are going to represent you in absentia. Once you've picked all the Aspects for your character, take a step back and look at them as a whole, and ask yourself if they make the kind of representation you'd want them to. If they don't, change them!

By themselves, Aspects can't say it *all*, of course, and it's important to remember that. Short of making each Aspect a paragraph or essay, you're dealing with a few short, catchy phrases and names here. You want them reasonably short, because you want to be able to talk about them casually without running out of breath.

But the brevity of an Aspect's name means some things are left unspoken, so take some time with the Story Teller to speak these unspoken things when you can. Both the player and the Story Teller should look at an Aspect not as the end of an idea, but the start of one. You're both going to bring your own ideas of what the Aspect means to the table and, at least to some extent, you're both right. Usually this works out fine – the combined perspectives make the whole greater than the sum – but sometimes the Story Teller and the player will have a radically different idea of what the Aspect entails. Be clear with one another, and figure out how to iron out any differences – ideally, *before* the Fate points start flying.

That said, after you've gotten one or more sessions of play under your belt, you might feel like you've picked one or more Aspects that don't "feel right". We're sympathetic to that, and your Story Teller should be, too. If an Aspect doesn't seem to be working out well for you, you should feel free to ask your Story Teller if you can change it.

Even More Examples

In case you end up hard up for an idea, consider this list:

A Few Credits More
A Fistful Of Truth
A Good Day To Die
Alone In A Crowd
Amazing Grav Belt!
Architect Of Destruction
The Awful Truth
Barbarians
Been There
Black Sheep
Bookworm
Brandon, Warlord!
Business
"But It Works On My Datapad!"
"Carter, Save Me!"
Carter's In Trouble!
Champion
Chosen Of The Dark
Codebreaker
Collector
Continent
Cutting It Close
Dashing Naval Officer
Death Defying
Deathbed Legacy
Dogged
Doh San Meh, The Guardian!
Dreamer
Easy Mark
Eavesdropper
Enemy: Mandroid
Eureka!
Fearless
Femme Fatality
First On The Scene
Fly By Night
Friends In Low Places
Gimme A Minute
Girl In Every Starport
Glory Is Forever
Grease Monkey
The Granite Family
Great Expectations
Gumshoe
Hard Boiled
Haunted
Heart Of Gold
Hidden Crush
I Know A Guy
I've Got An Angle
Import/Export
Impossible Intellect
Incredible Ancient Energy Sword
Interesting Times
Intrepid Investigator
It Wasn't My Fault
It'd Take A Miracle!
Johnny On The Spot
Just Use More
Knows Too Much
Man Of Two Worlds
Marked By Destiny
Muckraking
Mysteries Of The Ancients
Naïve
The Names Of Evil
Never Good Enough
Nosy
On The Run
One Step Behind
Over My Head
Player Or Pawn?
President's Wrath
The Price Of Glory
Putting In Long Hours
Raised By Aliens
Respectable
Respected Authority
Save Our Souls!
Scottish Engineer
Scrappy
Sharpshooter
Shattered
Shiphead
Short Fuse
Silver Spoon
Social Chameleon
Soft Hearted
Something To Prove
Something's Not Right
Strength Of The Earth
Sucker For A Pretty Face
(Sword's Name)
"This Is Bigger Than I Thought!"
Troublemaker
Twitchy
Two Fisted
Uncivilised
Unspoken Love
War Buddies
Well Travelled
Work In Progress
Xenophile

Using Aspects

The process of using an Aspect begins by declaring that one is relevant. Either the player or the Story Teller may make this declaration. Then, determine if the Aspect's relevance is working for or against the character who has the Aspect. As a *general* rule of thumb, if it's *for*, the owner spends a Fate point. If it's *against*, the owner gains a Fate point unless he pays to avoid it.

This is the guiding principle that all specific uses of Aspects – invoking, tagging, compelling – start from. Each type of Aspect use has specific rules governing how it functions, but if you ever find yourself confused about the basics of using Aspects, come back to this principle, and work forward from there.

Invoking Aspects

An Aspect can be used to give you a bonus when that Aspect applies to the situation you are in. Doing this requires **spending a Fate point** (see Chapter 9), and is called **invoking the Aspect**. In this context, the Aspect makes the character better at whatever it is he's doing, because the Aspect in some way applies to the situation. Invoking an Aspect can be used to either:

- Pick up all the dice you rolled and re-roll them, *or*
- Leave the dice alone and add 2 to the result.

It is possible to use more than one Aspect on a single roll, but you cannot use the *same* Aspect more than once on the same roll or action; even if you've re-rolled the dice, that's still the "same roll". Re-rolls are riskier than just taking the +2 bonus – you can always end up worsening things or not making much improvement – but if your first roll really sucked, a reroll can be a much cheaper way to recover.

The Story Teller is the final arbiter of when an Aspect is or is not appropriate. Usually this means the player must invoke an Aspect that is appropriate to the situation at hand. If the player wants to invoke an inappropriate-seeming Aspect, he should be given a chance to describe how the action is appropriate to the Aspect. The Story Teller's priority here is not to strictly limit the use of Aspects but rather to encourage their appropriate use by encouraging players to make decisions that keep their Aspects interesting.

For example...

Here's an example: Astraade Menin sees Brandon Carter knocked off the flying City Disc on Ardune VI. He rushes to catch Brandon before he hits the ground. Astraade rolls Athletics and does terribly, getting -3 on the dice. Thankfully he has Aspects called 'Brandon's In Trouble!', 'Crazy', and 'Fearless' so he uses the first and spends a Fate point to re-roll the dice.

His next roll of +1 is better, but Astraade is worried that it's not high enough, and he'd really like more of a bonus. He can't use 'Brandon's In Trouble!' again on the same action, so he spends a Fate point and suggests that this is a pretty 'Crazy' thing to do, hoping to get the +2 bonus. The Story Teller looks skeptical, and Astraade's player suggests perhaps his 'Fearless' Aspect could be used, if his 'Crazy' Aspect isn't relevant. The Story Teller says that 'Fearless' isn't really applicable either, because she's not taking any significant risks. Astraade has no more ideas based on his character sheet, but thankfully there are other options... (see below!)

Invoking for Effect

A player can also **invoke an Aspect for effect**, using it for a related benefit that is not related to a die roll or Skill use at all. This costs a Fate point like any other invocation does. For example, a player could invoke a Secret Organisation Aspect to declare that the group has a chapter in town.

This is subject to the same sort of restrictions as spending Fate points for minor declarations (see page 201) but is more potent due to the focus of the Aspect. To be explicit, when an Aspect is part of a declaration, it can make the less plausible more plausible, thus allowing the player to "get away with" more. The scope of the minor declaration can be... well, less minor, and the Story Teller is encouraged to keep this in mind.

For example, if the Story Teller is inclined to um and ah over whether or not the character can spend a Fate point to declare that he arrives at the exactly right moment, invoking the character's 'Perfect Timing' or

'Grand Entrance' Aspect for that same effect should remove any of the Story Teller's doubts. That said, this is not a method for the players to get away with anything; as always, Aspect invocation is only allowed when the Story Teller approves.

Encountering other Aspects

The Aspects on your character are not the only Aspects that you can potentially use. Your fellow players' characters have Aspects, of course, as do some Extras; sometimes even the **scene itself** may have Aspects, like 'Dark' or 'Cluttered'.

To invoke an Aspect other than your own, your character needs to directly interact with the object, location, or person that has the Aspect you want to invoke, in a way appropriate to the action in progress. This means that if a scene has an Aspect of 'Zero-G' (since it's on a derelict spaceship), not only does that mean characters can be described as bouncing off walls, but characters can invoke the 'Zero-G' Aspect when they do so. And that leads us to...

Tagging

Tagging refers to the act of invoking an Aspect that isn't your own; this includes scene Aspects and Aspects on other characters. In most respects this functions the same way as with an Aspect on your own character's sheet – spend the Fate point, and get either a +2 bonus or a re-roll.

For example...

Continuing the above example, Astraade's player knows that Brandon has the Aspect 'Astraade, Save Me!'. It's something both players set up during character creation because they thought it might be fun if the obviously heroic Brandon Carter was constantly getting in over his head and needing his ace fighter pilot pal to bail him out. Astraade's player thinks this is a perfect time for him to tag 'Astraade, Save Me!' even though it's Brandon's Aspect, because he's interacting with Brandon in this case by, well, saving him. If Astraade had been trying to save someone else, Brandon's Aspect wouldn't have been of any use to him. The Story Teller approves this use of Brandon's Aspect, and Astraade spends the Fate point to get another +2 from it for his Athletics Skill total.

I'M A RESPECTABLE PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR. YOU CAN CHECK MY I.D. WITH THE NEW MOSCOW DATABASE.
ALL IN GOOD TIME, SIR. I'M SURE YOU WON'T OBJECT TO COMING ALONG TO THE STATION TO HELP WITH OUR ENQUIRIES.
POLICE

AXEL'S NEXT ATTACK DID DISARM CAPTAIN BLOOD.
GO ON . . . FINISH IT OFF.
I'M NOT A COLD-BLOODED KILLER. I WANT SOME INFORMATION, THAT'S ALL. BUT FIRST I THINK WE OUGHT TO HAVE A LOOK AT WHO YOU REALLY ARE.

Taggable Aspects are sometimes introduced into play as the result of your character's action. This can happen due to a manoeuvre in a conflict (see page 216), a declaration of a previously nonexistent Aspect (see page 98), or the assessment of a target and revelation of one of the target's previously hidden Aspects (see page 24).

Whenever an Aspect is introduced into play like this, it's because the character has made some sort of effort to bring it to the fore – he's rolled well on whatever Skill check brought the Aspect onto the map. Because this is the case, he's earned the right to tag the Aspect in question once, without spending a Fate point. In this way he's able to turn his previous success into a momentary advantage without it hitting his Fate point budget.

A free tag is subject to one key limitation: it must occur **immediately** after the Aspect has been brought into play. Some minor delay isn't encouraged, but is acceptable. This usually means that the free tag must be taken within the **same** scene that the Aspect was introduced.

The player who introduced the Aspect has the option to pass his free tag to another character if he so wishes. This can allow for some great setup manoeuvres in a fight; one person manoeuvres to place an Aspect on a target, then passes the free tag to an ally, who attacks, using the advantage. This can only be done, however, if it is reasonable that the advantage could be "passed off". A sniper who uses a manoeuvre to aim his rifle at a target, putting an 'In My Sights' Aspect on it, can't pass the advantage to someone else – the Aspect placed is specific to him. But if one character used a manoeuvre to put an 'Off Balance' Aspect on a foe, he could reasonably pass the advantage to his buddy who moves in for the knockout blow.

When the character does spend a Fate point to tag another character's Aspect, it might mean that the character getting tagged is due a reward. If the character tagging is getting a benefit out of it that is to the tagged character's *detriment*, then the Fate point spent on the tag goes to the tagged character at the end of the exchange (*i.e.*, he can't use it until the next exchange).

Tagging often involves temporary Aspects that result from manoeuvres. Make sure you have a grasp on how temporary Aspects behave; see the "How to Do Things" chapter for more. Many temporary Aspects are fragile, and may disappear after their first tag (what does that mean exactly? – read that chapter!).

To Catch a King (Tagging for Effect)

It's important to remember that the Aspects which have been placed on a character can be invoked for effect just as easily as they can be invoked for a bonus. A classic example of this is from the play Hamlet, where Hamlet arranges a very specific play to test the King's guilt. There, the performance by the actors was less about putting an Aspect on the scene (see page 91), so much as putting a specific Aspect on the King himself (such as 'A Revelation of Murder').

If a character is aware of such an Aspect on another, he may tag for effect, **spending a Fate point** to trigger (potentially) the circumstances of a compel (see "Compelling Aspects", page 94) depending on what the player declares and the Story Teller accepts.

If it does turn out to be a compel-worthy circumstance, then the Story Teller may proceed with it. This is a chain reaction; the tag for effect occurs, and concludes with the Story Teller indicating whether or not it struck home.

If it struck home, then it's now the Story Teller's job to run the compel with the target – and since it's a compel, it includes the option for the target to spend a Fate point instead of receiving one, to buy out of it. Note that because this is a compel that is now in the Story Teller's hands, if the target buys out of the compel, the Fate point spent does not go to the tagger!

As far as the *tagger's* involvement is concerned, however, this is often happening as part of his "free tag" for placing or revealing the Aspect on the target – so his own Fate point liability is trivial.

Sadly for Claudius (and ultimately Hamlet!), he accepted the Fate point (perhaps as a compel against his 'Guilty Conscience') and betrayed himself.

Guessing Aspects

Tags usually happen when the tagger has a clear idea of which Aspects are there to be tagged. But this is not always the case; sometimes, the player is making a *guess*. Guesses are allowed, but are subject to some special rules.

If the guess hits reasonably close to the mark conceptually, even if it doesn't exactly match the Aspect's name, the Story Teller should exercise some flexibility and allow it. For example, someone might guess that a scene has a 'Darkness' Aspect on it and ask if they can tag it for their Stealth roll. Even though the scene had the Aspect 'Shadowed Corners' instead, this is reasonably close to the mark; the Story Teller should reveal that the Aspect is 'Shadowed Corners', and allow the tag.

If the guess just plain misses the mark, and the fact that the mark was missed doesn't constitute a significant, potentially secret, piece of information, the player should get the chance to reconsider and take back his Fate point. Using the same example, if the player was asking if the scene had a 'Darkness' Aspect, and the Story Teller instead believes the scene is too well lit for that, she would simply tell the player it's a no-go. While the fact that the scene is well lit is certainly important, it's something the player could discover with a simple question and answer about the details of the scene, so it doesn't really rate as a secret; he shouldn't be charged a Fate point for that.

If the guess misses the mark, but missing the mark tells the player something significant and potentially secret, the Fate point is still spent. This sort of circumstance almost never comes up with scene Aspects, but can come up when guessing at Aspects on another character. For example, if a character is looking to tag someone's 'Guilty Conscience' to help him intimidate that target, and it turns out that the target doesn't have that Aspect for him to tag, the Fate point stays spent, because it is significant and secret that the target does *not* have an Aspect that's even in the ballpark of 'Guilty Conscience'.

In the worst case scenario, a character's guess misses the mark because he's been duped. This will most often happen as the result of a Deceit action (see page 110), although it might arise from other circumstances. In such a case, the deceiver has the option to return the Fate point to the tagger, or to leave it spent. If he leaves it spent, the tagger learns he was duped. The deceiver does not get this spent Fate point for himself – it's simply gone. If he returns it to the tagger, things may actually be a bit worse for the tagger: the deceiver gets to place a temporary Aspect on him (and the first tag's for free, as above), representing how the deceiver managed to snooker the target.

Regardless, guesses can't, and shouldn't, be made willy-nilly – there must always be a justification for making the guess. If the guess seems unjustified – if the player is "shotgunning" guesses to randomly try to figure out another character's Aspects – the Story Teller is completely justified in shutting that player down cold.

Compelling Aspects

An Aspect can also allow a player to gain more Fate points, by bringing complications and troubling circumstances into his character's life. When this occurs, it's referred to as **compelling the Aspect**. The Story Teller performs a **compel**; when she compels someone's Aspect, she's indicating that the character is in a position where the Aspect could create a problem. However, players can cause the Story Teller to compel another character's Aspects, via tagging, with a similar rationale and results (see "Tagging for Effect", above). The target whose Aspect is compelled usually has the choice of **spending a Fate point** and ignoring the Aspect, or taking the consequences and limitations on his choices and **receiving a Fate point**. When the target accepts the Fate point, the Aspect is officially **compelled**.

There are a couple of ways an Aspect can complicate a character's life.

An Aspect may limit actions and choice. If a character is given a situation where he would normally have a number of choices, and limiting those choices to act in accordance with his Aspect is going to make more trouble for the character, that's grounds to compel the Aspect. It's important to note that an Aspect may dictate the *type* of action, but it usually shouldn't dictate the *precise* action, which is always the player's decision. In this way, the compel highlights the difficulty of the choices at hand by placing limits on those choices.

For example...

Captain Drake Dundee has an Aspect for his arch nemesis, Commander Sereena McDevitt. At a reception aboard the newly commissioned Fleet Carrier Revenge, Drake bumps in to Sereena. Now, because Sereena is Drake's enemy, the Aspect would compel Drake to respond in some way. Drake can opt to spend a Fate point to play it cool and not respond to Sereena and her inevitable snide comments. Alternately, Drake may receive a Fate point for responding appropriately, given the long-standing enmity between them. Whether "appropriately" means insulting Sereena or accidentally tipping his drink over her is entirely up to Drake's player.

An Aspect may also *complicate* a situation, rather than directly limiting a character's choices. If everything would be going along normally, and the Aspect makes things more difficult or introduces an unexpected twist, that's also grounds for a compel. In come cases, complications may suggest that certain consequences are mandated, such as failing at a particular action – perhaps the character would succeed at a defense roll against a Deceit action, but his 'Gullible' Aspect is compelled, forcing a failure if accepted.

For example...

Brandon Carter has the Aspect 'First on the Scene', which is usually useful, but can cause problems, especially if the scene is going to be an ambush. Brandon is currently rushing towards an explosion engineered by Dorien Mamba the legendary pirate. Other characters are en route, but the Story Teller pulls out a Fate point and looks at Brandon's player and says, "Odds are pretty good that you're First on the Scene." Brandon's player has two options at that point.

First he can slide a Fate point to the Story Teller and say, "Certainly, but Brandon is not so rash as to rush in without backup. His friends are mere moments behind him!" in which case the Story Teller takes the point, and the scene proceeds with everyone present.

Second, and more likely, Brandon's player could go "Hell yeah!" and take the Fate point. At that point the Story Teller would describe Brandon getting there ahead of everyone else, so for the first exchange he must fight alone against Dorien Mamba and his pirate minions!

Sometimes the Aspect may add a complication "off-screen", such as when the Story Teller decides to use a character's personal nemesis as the villain for a session. In such a case the Story Teller should remember to give the character a Fate point. This is *technically* a compel – it does complicate things – but more practically it's more of a "thank you" to the player for giving the Story Teller a hook to build the adventure around, and is done without offering the player the option to buy out of it.

Negotiating a Compel

In play, both the Story Teller and players can initiate compels. When the Story Teller initiates a compel, the process is very simple. The Story Teller remarks that the Aspect might be appropriate here, and offers the player a Fate point and the player either accepts it and takes appropriate action or accepts appropriate consequence, or he pays one of his Fate points to the Story Teller and chooses not to accept the consequences of the compel.

In a perfect world, the Story Teller is always aware of all Aspects and always knows when they should be compelled and rewarded. In practice, the Story Teller is keeping track of a *lot* of stuff, and may not realise that a player has an Aspect that is appropriate to the situation. When that happens, the player should feel free to capture the Story Teller's attention and point to the appropriate Aspect, and hold up a Fate point, indicating that he thinks it's time for a compel.

The Story Teller will then do one of two things.

1. She may hold up a Fate point of her own, as if she were compelling the Aspect, offering the player a choice to pay or be paid.
2. She may defer, offering a brief explanation. The Story Teller may defer for any reason – but doing so too often is potential grounds for gathering up a posse and driving the Story Teller out of town covered in tar and feathers.

When a player calls attention to one of his character's Aspects, it may be as formal as "I think my 'Greedy' Aspect applies here" or it may be more conversational, like "Boy, this is tough. I mean, I am pretty * Greedy * " (brandishes a Fate point). There's no one way to do it, and groups are encouraged to fall into whatever pattern is most comfortable for them.

Accidental Compels

Sometimes characters simply play to their Aspects without thinking to compel them. When that happens, the Story Teller should make a note of it (sometimes with the player reminding her) and, if possible, award the player with a Fate point retroactively. If it's too late for that, the Story Teller should make a note to give that player one extra Fate point next session.

It's important that the Story Teller keep in mind what sorts of things would normally constitute a compel. Compels happen in order to make certain choices or situations more difficult or more dramatic for the compelled character. Certainly, staying in character and playing in a way that's appropriate to a character's Aspects should be praised; but it should be rewarded only when the player's Aspect-consistent play has actively made his character's choices more difficult.

Conflicting or Contradictory Aspects

Occasionally a character's Aspects will be in head-to-head conflict with one another. This should not be seen as a problem — rather, it's an opportunity for high drama! When two Aspects are in conflict with one another, they are both subject to a compel. If the player can't see a way to act in accordance with both Aspects, he must buy off at least one of them. In a number of cases, this can lead to a "zero sum", where one compel is accepted, gaining a Fate point, and the other is refused, spending that Fate point. If the player can see clear to acting in accordance with both – fantastic! He's just gotten himself two Fate points (and a world of trouble).

The Story Teller needn't always press the issue in this fashion. Nothing says she has to compel both Aspects. But occasionally it's more interesting if she does.

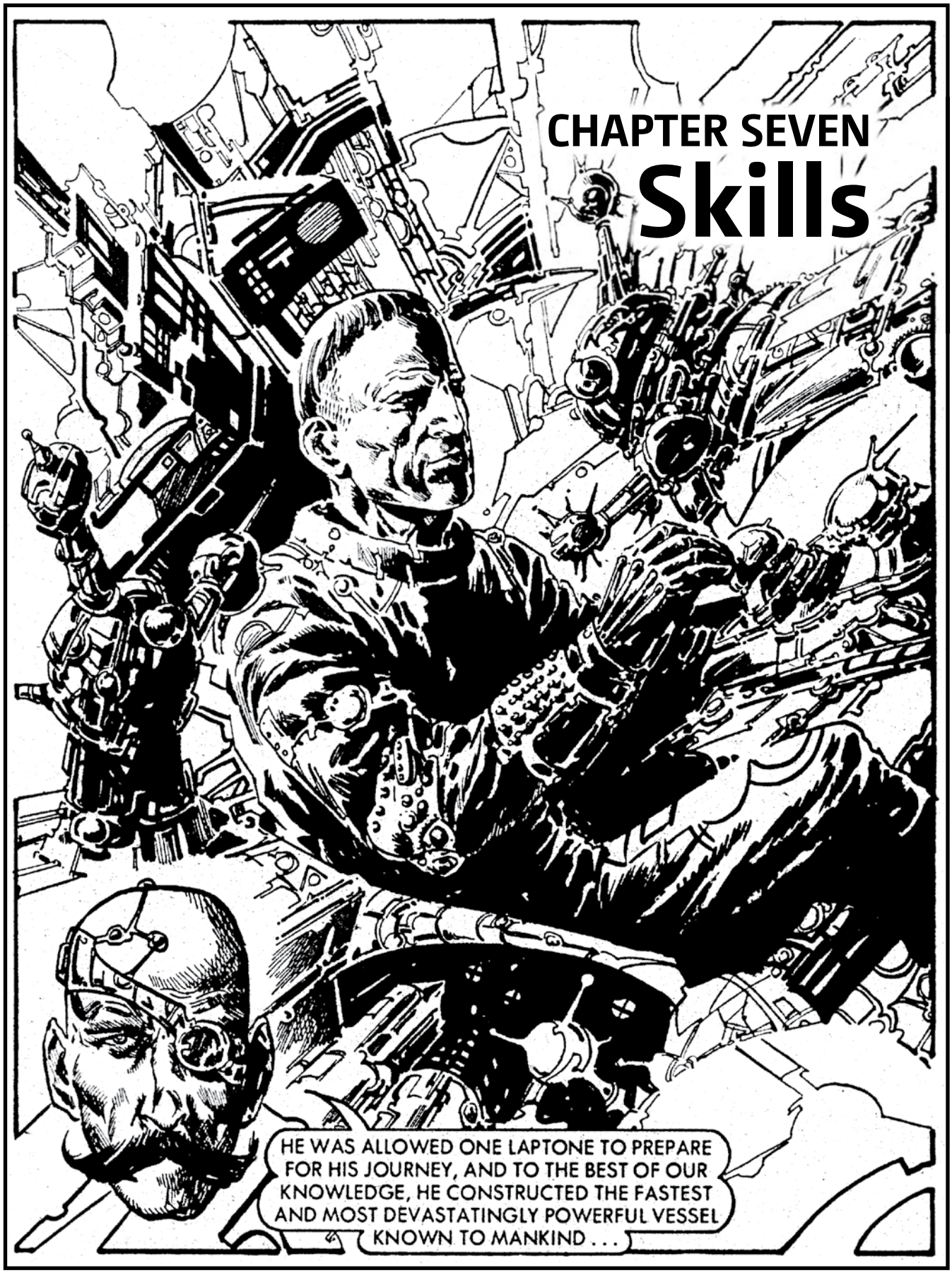
Escalation

Rarely, in moments of high tension or drama, the Story Teller can choose to **escalate** a compel. This is an *optional rule*, and should really only be used when the character getting compelled is having a *defining moment* in his or her story.

Escalation can occur only when a player has bought out of a compel. To escalate, the Story Teller slides forward a second Fate point, and prompts the player with something like, "Are you sure...?" If the player accepts, he'll get two Fate points instead of one; if he refuses, it's going to cost him two Fate points instead of one. In the rarest of cases, facing a second refusal, the Story Teller may escalate a final time, making the reward and cost to buy out three Fate points. If the player is willing to spend three to refuse this truly monstrous compulsion, the book is closed.

If a player is willing to step it up, he can prompt the Story Teller to start an escalation as well. When sliding forward his first Fate point to buy off a compel, the player should say something like, "I won't go along for one Fate point..." Most Story Tellers will look at the situation at that point and decide whether or not it's a moment of high drama; if it isn't, they'll take the proffered point, but if it is, the escalation's on!

Whatever the case, escalation should be done sparingly; it's best as a spice, and can be overwhelming as a main dish.


CHAPTER SEVEN
Skills
HE WAS ALLOWED ONE LAPTONE TO PREPARE FOR HIS JOURNEY, AND TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, HE CONSTRUCTED THE FASTEST AND MOST DEVASTATINGLY POWERFUL VESSEL KNOWN TO MANKIND . . .

Skill List

Skill	Category	Skill	Category	Skill	Category
Academics	Knowledge	Endurance	Physical	Rapport	Social
Alertness	Perception	Engineering	Craft	Resolve	Social
Art	Craft/ Knowledge	Fists	Combat	Resources	Mundane
		Gambling	Mundane	Science	Knowledge
Athletics	Physical	Guns	Combat	Sleight of Hand	Subterfuge
Burglary	Subterfuge	Intimidation	Social	Starship Gunnery	Combat
Contacting	Social	Investigation	Perception	Starship Pilot	Mundane
Deceit	Social	Leadership	Social	Starship Systems	Craft
Drive	Mundane	Might	Physical	Stealth	Subterfuge
Empathy	Social/ Perception	Mysteries	Knowledge	Survival	Mundane
		Pilot	Mundane	Weapons	Combat

Skills

Characters have **Skills**, like Drive, Guns or Starship Pilot, which are rated on the ladder (page 594)**.** Considered on the most basic level, Skills represent what your character can do. When a character rolls the dice, he usually is rolling based on his Skill.

Nearly every action that the character might undertake is covered by his Skills. If he doesn't have a Skill on his sheet, either because he didn't take it or the Skill itself doesn't exist, it is assumed to default to Mediocre (+0).

This chapter is focused on getting an idea of what each Skill does. Skills can be enhanced by the addition of Stunts; Stunts are covered in their own chapter (page 145).

Assessment and Declaration

Skills can sometimes be combined (see page 218). It's also possible to use one Skill to set up a situation that another Skill can take advantage of, via manoeuvres and temporary Aspects (see page 224). Finally, Skills can sometimes be used in partnership with one another, via **assessments** and **declarations.**

Sometimes Skills will be used in careful assessment well in advance of taking action – maybe as part of putting together a plan, or simply observing the target long enough to learn something that would be a critical advantage. This approach is most often used with Skills that have an element of perception – including Investigation, Empathy, and even Burglary. Here, the Skill is not used to place a temporary Aspect so much as discover an existing one. The character making the assessment still can tag this Aspect for free, but is still subject to the usual limitations of a free tag – they must do so immediately after revealing it. This usually means that the free tag must be taken within the same scene as the assessment or, if the assessment takes longer than a scene to perform, in the scene which immediately follows. This provides a reward to balance out the time the player might otherwise spend talking through a more cautious plan.

All assessment efforts require the use of a significant chunk of time. This can allow Skills that usually can't come to bear in more time-sensitive environments (like a fight) to come to bear thanks to the time invested in advance.

Perception Skills only allow the discovery of what already exists. By contrast, knowledge Skills will often allow declaration – in other words, using a knowledge Skill successfully can allow a player to introduce entirely new facts into play, and then use those facts to his advantage. The new facts take the form of a temporary Aspect. The Story Teller is encouraged to use creativity as her primary guideline, when judging the use of knowledge Skills. Creative and entertaining facts will be more likely to result in a successful use of a knowledge Skill, and thus give rise to a temporary Aspect, than boring facts will. For example, an Explorer with a solid Academics Skill might use the declaration ability to state new truths about an alien world the characters have just encountered – and if successful, suddenly the scene or the world has an Aspect on it in keeping with the fact the player just

invented. As with manoeuvreing and assessment, the first tagging of this Aspect is free.

Unlike assessment, declaration doesn't take any actual in-game time at all – just the knowledge Skill to make use of it.

Example of Declaration

A player, whose character is an expert in alien civilisations, attempts declaration: "These aliens were well known for having secret compartments to hide their most treasured possessions." The Story Teller allows it, the player succeeds at the roll and 'creates' a secret compartment that the Story Teller didn't plan. The player and the Story Teller discuss where it ought to lead, etc. Player: "There might be a secret control pane somewhere near this wall... <thump thump> ah, here it is! Now, to find out how to open it..."

Any Aspects brought into play by these methods do not have to go away after they're used, if the Story Teller wishes them to persist (or if circumstances merely make it reasonable that they hang around). Any subsequent uses of such Aspects, however, will cost (or grant!) a Fate point, as usual. This does mean that occasionally manoeuvres and assessments and declarations will backfire, leading to a compel. Since Aspects are involved, such things are easily double-edged!

Finally, when dealing with a target that has multiple Aspects on it due to assessment and/or declaration, it is not possible to use multiple "free" tags at the same time. On a given roll, only one "free" tag may be used. Fate points may be spent to tag the other Aspects that have been assessed or declared on the same roll, and later rolls may use other free tags.

The Skill List

Each skill has a number of **trappings**, which are the rules for how to use each skill in certain specific circumstances. We've given the trappings names in order to make them easier to reference. In some ways, trappings are like stunts which anyone with the skill can perform. Whenever you encounter a trapping, you'll see this symbol 👁 next to it.

Academics

(Stunts, page 145)

Academics is a knowledge Skill. It measures the character's "book learning". Any knowledge that would not explicitly fall under Science, Mysteries, or Art falls under this Skill (though some overlap may exist among all of those). Characters with high Academics include scholars of antiquity, alien civilisations, professors and know-it-alls.

The main use of Academics is to answer a question. Questions covered by Academics include those of history, literature, sociology or any of the "soft" sciences – in short, most information that is neither art nor science.

The player can ask the Story Teller "What do I know about this subject?" or "What does this mean?" Often, there will be no need to roll, especially if the subject is within the character's specialty (see Scholar, page 146) but if the Story Teller feels the information is something that should be hard to attain (such as a clue) then she may call for a roll against a difficulty she sets. When setting the difficulty for a research roll, the best yardstick is the obscurity of the knowledge sought. Something with a Fantastic difficulty is probably only known by one or two people in the world. Superb difficulty is limited to the handful of leading experts. Great would equate to all the top men in the field, while Good and lower start getting into the common body of knowledge. Difficulties beyond Fantastic are appropriate for lost knowledge. Shifts on the roll should correspond to the depth of detail discovered.

If the character succeeds, he receives the information. If he fails, he does not, but he may still attempt to research the topic (see below) – or, perhaps more entertainingly, may stumble onto a false lead that gets him deeper into trouble.

Research [Academics]

If a character fails an Academics roll they can spend time researching to find the answer as long as they have access to a good library in some form. The amount they fail the Academics roll by is the length of time in time periods (page 237) required to find the answer.

The quality of the library determines the hardest possible question that can be answered within it (so a question of Good difficulty requires a Good library or better).

Most schools and private individuals have Mediocre, Average, or Fair libraries. Small colleges often have Good libraries while larger institutions may have Great ones. Superb and better libraries are few and far between. Many Libraries also have a specialty or two where they are considered one step higher – for example, Star Patrol's library specialises in Intergalactic Law, so it has a Great Library, which is treated as Superb for questions of Law. Characters may own libraries of their own; see the Resources Skill (page 131) for more.

Exposition & Knowledge Dumping [Academics]

The Story Teller can use the character with the highest knowledge Skill to impart information to the group. The player should be given a Fate point if they introduce the information in an interesting way. "Wait this reminds me of the time we explored Dandau IV, yes I knew these were the same inscriptions. They say..."

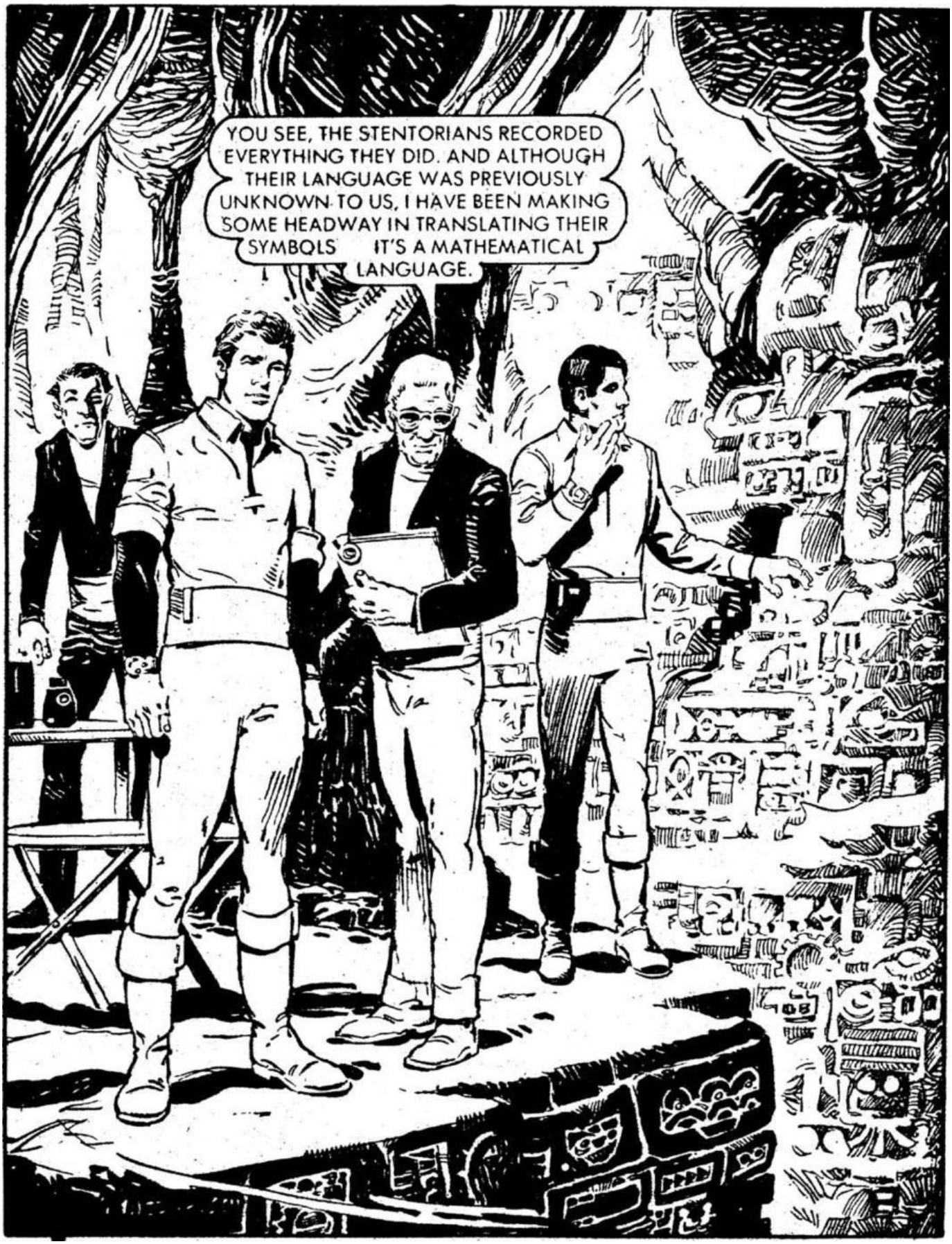
Declaring Minor Details [Academics]

The character may use his knowledge to declare facts, filling in minor details which the Story Teller has not mentioned. These facts must be within the field of Academics, and the Story Teller has the right to veto them. However, if the Story Teller is all right with it, she may let the player make a declaration and roll Academics against a difficulty she sets. If successful, the fact is true, and if not, the character is mistaken.

This is a straight up declaration action, as described earlier (see page 98). If the academic or another character takes action based on the declared fact, that person can tag the Aspect that has been introduced. If the academic is wrong, there is no penalty, but there may be complications, the Story Teller could place a temporary "mistaken" Aspect on the academic, compelling it to represent the fall-out (and netting the mistaken academic a Fate point!). If the academic was right, the Aspect is placed, and is taggable as described earlier – first one being free.

Languages [Academics]

Languages are part of a good classical education. A character may speak a number of additional languages based on his Academics Skill. Each step of Academics above Mediocre gives the character knowledge of one


YOU SEE, THE STENTORIANS RECORDED EVERYTHING THEY DID. AND ALTHOUGH THEIR LANGUAGE WAS PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN TO US, I HAVE BEEN MAKING SOME HEADWAY IN TRANSLATING THEIR SYMBOLS IT'S A MATHEMATICAL LANGUAGE.

additional language (so one at Average, two at Fair, and so on). The player does not need to choose the languages when the character is created; instead, he may simply choose languages in the course of play, as is convenient.

The Truth [Academics]

Sometimes a character will get a wrong answer, but believe it to be the truth. A wrong answer should only be a result of one of two things. First, it may be the result of the compelling of an Aspect – the player may be offered a Fate point for his character to go haring off on a tangent or to reach the wrong conclusion. Alternately, it may be as a result of an active deception, such as someone planting bad information.

To plant bad information, a character must decide what question (in general) they're providing false information about. The character must have access to the target's library (see Research, page 100) and make an Academics roll modified by Deceit (see "Combining Skills", page 218) in addition to whatever rolls he may need to get in and out of the place where the information is stored.

The result of that roll is the difficulty to spot the false information. When someone tries to discover information that is affected by this deception, he must make an Academics roll as usual. If that roll is less than the difficulty set by the deception, then the false information is discovered one step earlier than the real information might be. If the failure is significant (missing the mark by three or more), then the true information may simply be unavailable. If the researcher meets or exceeds the roll for the deception, he finds the false information and recognises it for what it is.

Alertness

(Stunts, page 147)

Alertness is a measure of the character's passive level of awareness, his ability to stay on his toes and react to sudden changes in his environment. Characters will notice things they are not actively searching for by using their Alertness Skill. High Alertness characters are rarely surprised, strike early in a fight, and tend to pick up on details of a scene simply by entering it. Characters with high Alertness include bodyguards, outdoorsmen and criminals of a sneaky variety.

Passive Awareness

Players will rarely ask to roll Alertness – if they are actively looking for something, Investigation is usually more appropriate. Alertness is more appropriate for things that players and characters do not expect or are not looking for, such as whether they notice a surprise, or if they happen to spot a hidden clue. This Skill is reactive perception; as such, it's a Skill that the Story Teller ask for a roll rather than the player calling for one. The difficult should not be high though, if you want the players to find something.

The Story Teller should tell the person who did best first, then for each person down the line, tell them what they don't see. Doing it in this order lets the players get a clear picture, while making the limits of their characters' knowledge very clear.

Avoiding Surprise

Whenever ambushed (see Stealth, page 142), a character may make one final Alertness check against the Stealth of his attacker, in order to see if he is surprised. If he fails this check, his defense Skill is considered to be Mediocre for the first exchange.

Conflict Initiative

Simply compare Alertness levels with the highest going first and so on. If you have a tie with an opponent, both roll their Initiative Skill to decide who gets to act first.

Confusing Situation

If there is a lot of smoke, mirrors, low light or simply too much activity, it's reasonable to say all actions will be restricted by Alertness, imposing a -1 on all of a character's Skills rated higher than his Alertness.

Art

(Stunts, page 149)

Art measures the character's overall artistic ability, covering the gamut of endeavors, from painting to dance to music. This includes knowledge, composition, and performance. Characters with a high Art Skill include artists (obviously), aristocrats, and those of the avant garde.

Art is usually either used as a knowledge Skill, for knowledge about art, artists, and what it takes to make art, or as a crafting Skill, to create a work of art, or as a social Skill to entertain. In contents, where a performer or artist is trying to evoke a reaction from the target, the target should use their Perception Skill or their Art Skill (whichever is higher).

Art as Knowledge [Art]

As a knowledge Skill, Art is basically identical to Academics, though the fields it applies to are more limited and more focused – a few shifts of success on an Art roll may "pay out" more information than if someone applied Academics to the same art-related problem.

Art as Craft [Art]

As a crafting Skill, Art is fairly straightforward – characters can make art of virtually any type of a quality equal to their Skill. Without Stunts, none of them will be masterpieces, but any art that's Mediocre or better can be displayed without any real embarrassment.

Sometimes, however, creations must be improvised, and that can be a little more fast and furious. This usually takes a few minutes, and the

THEY'RE MADE OF MALIDIUM, A RARE AND PRECIOUS METAL FORBIDDEN TO BE TAKEN FROM THALIA. NO WONDER THE CAPTAIN SEEMED ANXIOUS ABOUT HIS CARGO. IT'S WORTH MILLIONS OF CREDITS.

character can make a roll to create their piece. Generally speaking, for the duration of the scene where it is displayed, the quality of the improvised piece is equal to their roll, with it degrading one step in each subsequent scene.

Art as Communication [Art]

While Academics covers the technical building blocks of communication, language, grammar and the like, Art covers the expression of ideas, and as such, covers most means of broad communication, like writing. These are not "pure" art forms, however, and a character's other Skills play a role in their application, so a character's writing is usually modified by their Academics. There are exceptions, such as dry, academic documents (which use pure Academics) and poetry (which uses just Art).

Public speaking is a similar creature, but it is more beholden to the charisma and presence of the speaker – in those cases, Art modifies whatever Skill (Rapport, Intimidate, Leadership or Deceit) the character is using, as long as there is a creative Aspect to the communication.

Art as Performance [Art]

Art can also be used to shape the mood of a group. Whenever a group is exposed to an artist's work, such as at a performance or a show, the scene may gain an Aspect appropriate to the performance. Normally, this Aspect only remains on the scene for the duration of the performance, but some Stunts allow this to extend into subsequent scenes.

In effect, this is a declaration on the part of the artist, but limited to declaring mood and emotional impact, rather than anything specific. In general, art inspires passion in a broad sense; for example, in may make someone feel hopeful, but not determine what he'll feel hopeful about. When making a standard performance, any temporary Aspects that result – either by treating the performance as a manoeuvre, or as an attack yielding consequences – must also be broad and nonspecific. "Hopeful" is good; "Hopeful That Admiral Seville Will Be Defeated" is not. There is an exception; a performance that very clearly has a target, such as a satire, may plant fairly specific opinions of a target such as "Admiral Seville is not to be trusted", with the difficulty based on the status of the target.

If the performance targets an individual, the base difficulty of the effort is the Contacting Skill of the target being satirised. The target's Contacting Skill is used to approximate the character's reputation and ability to mitigate the satire's impact. Treat this as an attack or manoeuvre as appropriate to the situation.

New Aspects added to a scene should be a cue for Extra behaviors. It's also worth remembering that the mood of a group offers a secondary opportunity for compels and other complications – if the mood of the room is somber, and a player fails to act in accordance with the mood, others will probably respond badly to them, rather the way people might respond to someone using their phone in a funeral.

Not every performance is going to put an Aspect on a scene. To start out, the artist describes what Aspect he's trying to put on the scene and how he's going to go about it. The difficulty for an adequate performance is Mediocre, but the difficulty for a performance that's good enough to shape the mood starts two higher, at Fair. This difficulty may be further

Factor	*Notes*	*Mod.*
Adding to a mood	If the room has an existing mood, adding an additional mood is a little harder.	+1
Changing a mood	If the new mood is going to replace an existing mood (either by design, or because it's actively contradictory to the existing mood), it's more difficult.	+3
Distractions	A noisy room or other activities will make it hard to focus on the performance.	+1
Major Distractions	It takes active effort to pay attention to the performance, such as when the performer is in a large, active area with many distractions.	+3
Total Distractions	There's no reason for anyone to be paying attention to the performance, such as on a battlefield.	+5

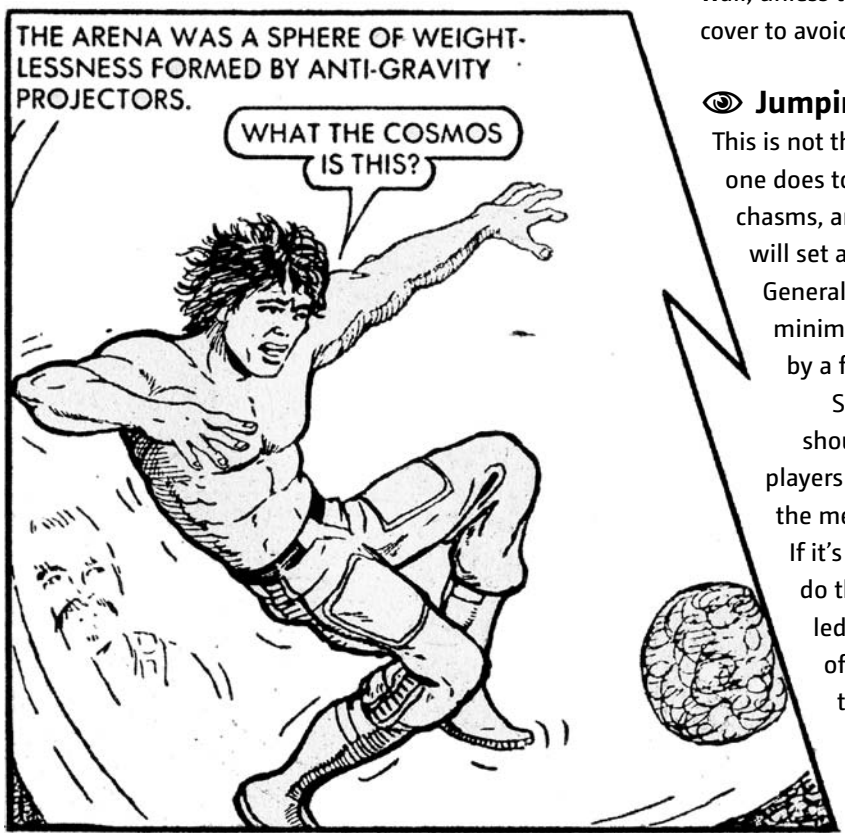
modified by other factors, seen on the previous page.

The baseline difficulty is Mediocre, and as long as the character beats that, the performance is technically adequate. The modifiers are applied to the performance that has an emotionally transportive quality. Essentially, the second difficulty indicates the number of shifts over Mediocre the artist needs to get in order to place an Aspect on the room – starting with two shifts for a distraction-free, no-existing-mood-to-address performance.

Forgery [Art]

Imitation has a long-standing place in the art world, and thus Art is quite good at making fakes, be they "lost" symphonies or falsified documents. When a character uses Art to make a forgery, the difficulty depends on the complexity of the thing being duplicated. The target would use their Perception or Art Skill, whichever is higher, to detect the forgery. Having an original on hand can help reduce the difficulty. Deceit should also be used to complement the effort.

Difficulties for forgery should be set at Mediocre for something simple like a letter or a speech, Good for something more involved like a painting, song or a novel, and Superb for something that will be challenging in its own right, like a symphony or multi-trillion selling album. The difficulty should also reflect the time it will take to produce the forgery. Subtract 1 from the difficulty if there is an original on hand to work from.



Athletics

(Stunts, page 150)

Athletics measures the character's general physical capability, excepting raw power, (which is Might, page 125) and long term endurance (which is Endurance, page 116), Athletics covers running, jumping, climbing, swimming, and other broadly physical activities you might find in a track and field event. Characters with high Athletics include athletes, soldiers and outdoorsmen.

Athletics is often the "when in doubt" physical Skill, and it can get a lot of use. There's sometimes confusion as to when to use Athletics and when to use Might. As a rule of thumb, Athletics is used to move yourself, Might is used to move other things and people. When an action calls for both, they may modify one another. If there is no clear indication which should be primary, default to Athletics as primary and Might as modifying Skill.

Don't ask the players to roll their Athletics Skill if it's to do something mundane – like climbing over a wall, unless they're being chased or need to get in to cover to avoid an impending explosion.

Jumping

This is not the Olympics – jumping is something one does to get over obstacles or across bottomless chasms, and in those situations the Story Teller will set a fixed difficulty to be met or exceeded. Generally, that difficulty is going to be the bare minimum to clear the distance, so beating that by a few shifts is often a good idea.

Situations requiring a difficult jump should be carefully designed. If you want the players to be able to cross you have to provide the means to do so, don't make it impossible. If it's a bottomless hole, and a player fails do they die? Of course not, there's always a ledge to catch or a hidden walkway just out of sight. Consider what you want the result to be if they do fail.

Sprinting

A character may use their Athletics to move faster by taking a sprint action. Normally, characters may only move one zone on their turn by turning over one of their shifts as a supplemental action. Characters who spend their entire action moving are sprinting; rolling Athletics against a target difficulty of Mediocre, they may cross a number of zones and borders equal to or less than the total shifts of effect. In the absence of borders, characters can always move a minimum of one zone. See page 218 for additional details.

Height	Base Difficulty
Short	Mediocre (+0)
Medium	Fair (+2)
Long	Great (+4) *
Extreme	Fantastic (+6) *

* Climbs of this length are Athletics restricted by Endurance unless the character has the ability to rest occasionally

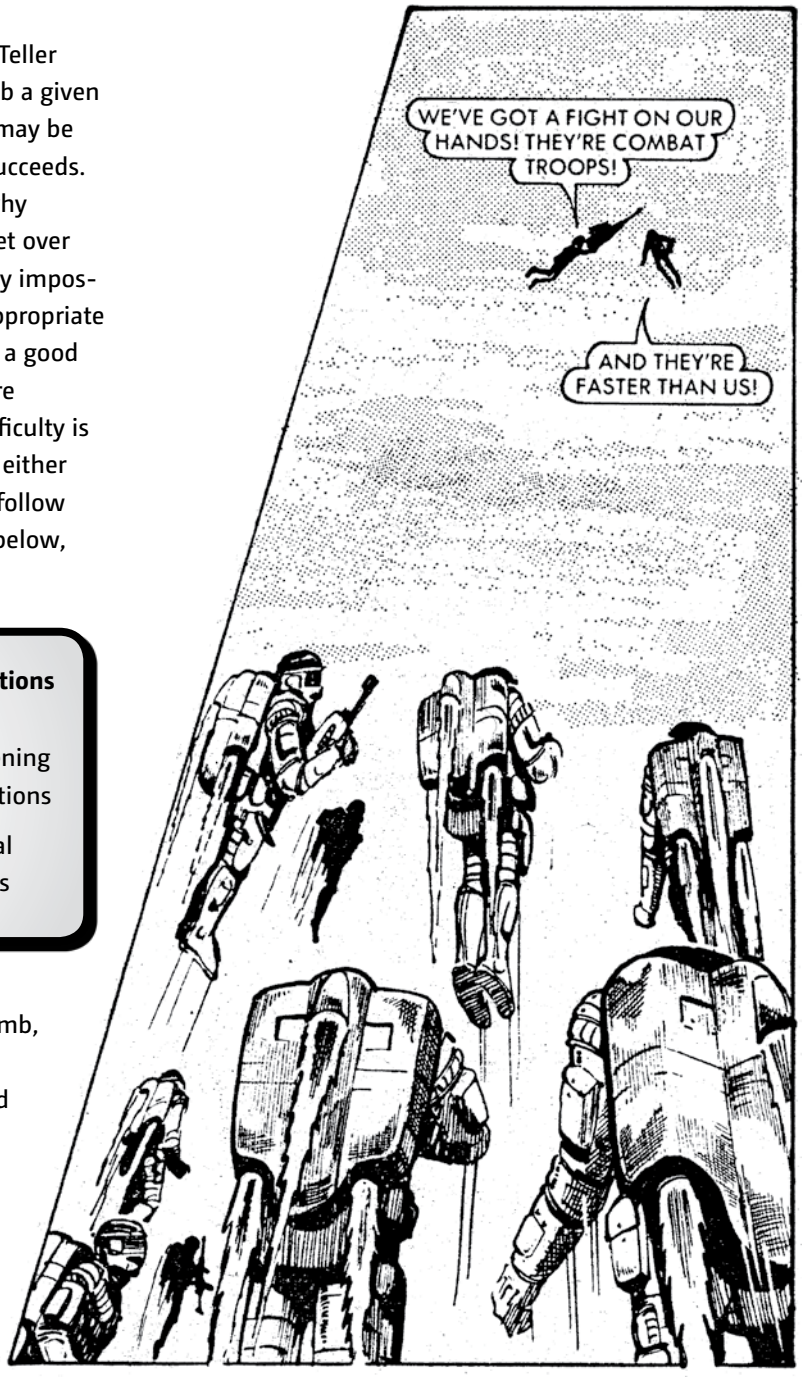
Climbing

Athletics is the Skill for climbing. The Story Teller will set a difficulty for how hard it is to climb a given obstacle. At the Story Teller's option, shifts may be used to speed the process if the character succeeds.

Unless you've got a really good reason why climbing needs a roll, just assume people get over the obstacle. If, however, the wall is virtually impossible to climb, that gives a character with appropriate Stunts an opportunity to shine – absolutely a good time to call for a roll. Climbing difficulties are determined in two steps. First, the base difficulty is determined by height. Climbs, like falls, are either Short, Medium, Long or Extreme, and they follow the same rules for height that falls do (see below, page 107).

Mod.	Slipperiness	Visibility	Distractions
+1	Wet or slick	Dark or Raining	Non-threatening interactions
+2	Completely smooth	Pitch Black	External dangers

These difficulties assume a fairly easy climb, a situation with many hand and footholds, like a fence. They are subsequently modified by circumstance. The three main factors affecting a claim are slipperiness, visibility and distractions. Each of these can increase the difficulty by 1 or 2.



Given all these difficulties, certain climbs (like a giant glass skyscraper at night, while someone's shooting at you) are going to be too difficult even to try, so it's important for a climber to know his limits (or have Stunts to exceed them).

Climbing either works or it doesn't and a player works out at the bottom that he can't make it, unless you want to make it interesting and let them get to a certain point to find out the wind has picked up and suddenly it seems a little more difficult. This could involve use of Fate points and Aspects to ensure the player makes it to the top

Dodging

Athletics can be used as a defensive Skill to respond to attacks in physical combat, and works very well in conjunction with taking a full defense action (granting a +2 to the roll; see page 217). The one important thing to note is that taking a defense action means that you can't use Athletics for other things, like sprinting.

Falling

When characters fall, they bypass the physical stress track entirely, and hop right to a consequence, with the severity of the consequence being determined by length of the fall. Characters who fall can roll Athletics to try to limit the severity of the result.

A short fall is usually anything under 20 feet. It can hurt, but in heroic fiction, such falls are little more than inconveniences. A medium fall is more substantial, anything up to three or four stories. If the fall is more than that, but you can still see details on the ground (say, 10 stories), it's a long fall. Anything more than that is an extreme fall. By default, a short fall imposes minor consequence, a medium fall imposes moderate consequences, a long fall imposes severe consequences, and an extreme fall hops right to taken out regardless of die rolls (unless Stunts get involved). See the table below for a summary of these effects.

When a character falls, he should roll Athletics. If he fails to make a Mediocre (+0) difficulty, the fall is treated as one category worse than it is. If he beats a difficulty based on the length of the fall (as shown in the table below), he may treat the fall as one step shorter (so a long fall would be come a medium fall and so on).

Extreme falls (and falls in general) are more useful as a threat than a reality. The danger of a fight on top of a skyscraper is emphasised by the danger of falling, but the falling should never be central to the scene, unless you can think of a way to make it very cool.

Fall	Height	Base Difficulty	Consequence
Short	Up to 20ft	Fair (+2)	Minor
Medium	Up to 40ft	Great (+4)	Moderate
Long	Can see the ground clearly	Fantastic (+6)	Severe
Extreme	Is that a house?	Can't be attempted without "Safe Fall" Stunt, page 151	Taken Out

Athletics in Combat

Athletics should never be used to inflict stress, but it is often a reasonable Skill for certain manoeuvres. If the manoeuvre involves pushing around heavy things, Might (or Might modified by Athletics) will be more appropriate, but if it's more about grace than power, Athletics is certainly a better match.

Burglary

(Stunts, page 151)

The ability to overcome security systems, from alarms to locks, falls under the auspices of this Skill. This also includes knowledge of those systems and the ability to assess them. Characters with a high Burglary include burglars, private eyes and even some cops.

Casing

Burglary can also be used as a very specialised perception Skill, specifically to assess the weaknesses and strengths of a potential target. Here, the character is trying to determine the existence of inobvious or hidden Aspects, using assessment (see page 98). This usage of Burglary can be blurred together with something like declaration, if the player comes up with an entertaining new Aspect to place on the target of his future burglaring. Thus, either the Story Teller can indicate that some flaw exists and has been discovered, or the player can make a declaration about a flaw in the security that he intends to defeat.

Since this will almost always give rise to a scene Aspect that will be broadly available and have a significant impact on the shape of the coming scene,

the Story Teller should be looking for the character to score several shifts above a standard difficulty of Mediocre – so, all other things being equal, rolls of Good or better will reveal findable flaws, unless a strong effort has been made to conceal those flaws.

Regardless of the method, the character makes a roll against a difficulty determined by the Story Teller, and if he succeeds, that fact is true, and may grant a +2 bonus to a roll where that information is useful. When a player is making declarations, casing follows the same guidelines as the minor details trapping for Academics (page 100), but is limited to security facts (including potential escape routes). As in either case this reveals an Aspect waiting to be tagged, the first +2 for tagging the Aspect is free, and subsequent uses on other rolls cost a Fate point, as always.

This really only address a static target, where there is no strong, driving force behind the security effort. If a significant Extra is taking an active role in, say, patrolling or monitoring security at a location, the location has suddenly become much more difficult to burgle. When this is the case, the casing effort may instead turn into Burglary (on the PC's part) vs. Burglary or Investigation (on the Extra's part) rolls – and the Extra may already be aware of the Aspect knowledge he wants to keep out of the PC's hands. If this is the case, such contests may function an awful lot like someone trying to "read" another person, as with Empathy, only it's a building or other location here rather than a person. For an idea of how to handle such cat-and-mouse Aspect revelations, see the sections on Empathy, Rapport, and Deceit (page 116, page 129, page 110).

Infiltration

Given an opportunity to case an intended target, the character is much more prepared to infiltrate that location. In addition to the benefits of tagging known Aspects that should permeate the scene, the character should also be on a strong footing for using his Burglary Skill to complement any Skills he uses on targets he's had a chance to study and prepare for. So Burglary can be used to complement his Stealth and Sleight of Hand, and even in certain circumstances social Skills such as Contacts and Deceit

Locks [Burglary]

Burglary will frequently see use in overcoming locks and other security measures. Most locks that a person runs into on a day to day basis are of only Mediocre difficulty, but more specialised locks are more difficult. As a rough guideline:

Front Door, Simple Padlock:	Mediocre
Quality Padlock, Office Door:	Average
Security Door:	Fair
Prison Cell:	Good
Safety Deposit Box, Cheap Safe:	Great
Expensive Safe:	Superb
Bank Vault:	Fantastic

Most locks require some sort of tools to open. For regular locks, this is some sort of pick, whereas safes and vaults require more specialised tools. These difficulties all assume investing a few minutes, if not longer, depending on the lock. If the character wishes to take less time, he must get additional shifts and adjust the timeframe according to the time table (page 237). If he lacks the proper tools, the difficulty is

boosted by a minimum of 2. He must have some kind of tools to use, however; the job can't be done unless it's a very unusual lock indeed.

Security [Burglary]

Security systems as a whole are just collections of smaller elements, like window locks, tripwires, alarm bells and so on. The quality of a security system (which determines its difficulty to assess or overcome) depends upon who was responsible for setting it up, and is based on either their Engineering or Burglary Skill. The cost of a security system is equal to its quality. If a character is building a security system for himself, this cost is reduced by one (quality, of course, stays the same).

Most often a security system should be defeated (or not) in a single roll. Failing that roll should make the matter more complicated – increasing difficulty or revealing that there are multiple steps that must be taken in order to make the job even possible – if not outright setting off any security measures that the character was trying to circumvent.

If the scene is a big and important one, with a complex security set-up in order to allow a Burglary focused character to strut his stuff, the Story Teller is encouraged to start things right at the "multiple steps" point. Such security systems may often be indicated by Aspects on the scene, and a player trying to get around them may be trying to alter or otherwise remove those Aspects from the scene. Alternately, the systems may have a stress track of their own, with the character's Burglary actions acting as "infiltration attacks" against the securities and failsafes.

Contacting

(Stunts, page 152)

Contacting is the ability to find things out from people. A character may know a guy, who knows a guy, or maybe he just knows the right questions to ask. Whatever his methods, he know hows to find things out by asking around. Characters with a high Contacting Skill include reporters, pirates, security agents and diplomats

A character with a high Contacting Skill knows a wide variety of people and has at least a mild amount of connection with virtually any organization.

The character needs to be able to get out and talk to people for it to be useful. Contacting is also limited by familiarity – a character finding himself in an entirely unfamiliar environment may encounter difficulties increased by as much as +4. Thankfully, Contacting also covers the Skill for building new social networks, so if a character stays in an area for any amount of time, he can diminish the difficulty by one per week spent.

Gather Information [Contacting]

Gathering information begins with a question, except the character goes out and talks to people, trying to find the answer to a question like, "Who's trying to kill me?" The player describes where his character is going to talk to folks (usually "the street"), the Story Teller sets the difficulty, and the player rolls at normal, at which point the Story Teller passes on whatever the player has discovered. If the Skills roll fails, then the process will take extra time increments as with a failed research effort; instead of needing a library, the character needs people to talk to. These people must have the right level of access to answer the question; this corresponds to the "quality" of a library. If the character is being "shut out" for one reason or another, no amount of dogged persistence through time investment is going to help. When that happens, it usually means there's another problem the player needs to solve first.

One important warning about authenticity – being the most informed guy and knowing all the latest gossip isn't necessarily the same thing. Contacting finds out what people know, and people always have their own biases. Information is only as good as the sources it comes from. Contacting rarely tests the veracity of the information provided – save by

the discovery, through several sources, that contradictory answers are coming from different sources. If a character wants to determine the truthfulness of the information he's finding, that's a more in-depth conversation, and may involve Empathy, Rapport, Deceit, and more.

Getting the Tip Off [Contacting]

Contacting also keeps the character apprised of the general state of things, and acts as a sort of social Alertness, keeping the character abreast of things that might be coming his way. It's far from foolproof, and like Alertness, the Story Teller is usually the one to call for a roll.

Tip-offs should be either vague or specific depending on how Story Teller wants the action to proceed. For example if you'd annoyed the crime lord of Centauri Beta III and he'd sent an assassin to take you out you might get a tip-off like, "I heard you really got a hair up Mister Big's nose. You should watch out." A good specific tip-off is "Black Jack the Pirate is in town, over at the southside Starport! They say he's got a gang of guys and is here to take you down! You need to get outta the city!"

The Black Jack tip-off at least says "to deal with this, you can go to the southside motel right now!" whereas "a hair up Mister Big's nose" suggests that it's simply the first step in a longer investigation to take out Mister Big or get rid of the unwanted attention.

Regardless, you need to be sensitive, as with any kind of investigation, to making sure that the process you kick off with a tip is not simply a parade of frustrating dead ends. Tips should head somewhere!

As a rule of thumb, like Alertness, don't have the character roll for a tipoff unless you have something to tell the character.

Rumors [Contacting]

Contacting is also useful for planting rumors, not just for ferreting them out. The player simply tells the Story Teller what rumor he wants to plant, and the Story Teller may assign bonuses and penalties based on how preposterous or reasonable the rumor is. The Story Teller then uses the final roll to determine what the result of the rumor is.

It's worth noting: the character's roll is also the target for someone else's Contacting roll to find out who's been spreading rumors, so be careful!

When a player plants a rumor, consider it a mental bookmark. Assuming anything but a terrible roll, that rumor should resurface later in the game. What form it takes depends on the player's roll.

Mediocre or Average:
The rumour earns passing mention

Fair or Good:
Other characters are passing around the rumour, even back to the original character

Great or better:
The rumour has spread far enough that someone (presumably the target) will do something in response to it. Additional shifts above Great may indicate that the rumour has spawned a number of alternate or embellished versions as well, all with the same thread running through them, or may be used to speed up the rate at which the rumour spreads.

Deceit

(Stunts, page 154)

Deceit is the ability to lie, simple as that. Be it through word or deed, it's the ability to convey falsehoods convincingly. Characters with a high Deceit Skill include grifters, spies, and politicians.

For simple deceptions, a contest between Deceit and an appropriate Skill (usually Empathy, Alertness or Investigation) is all that is necessary, but for deeper deceptions, like convincing someone of a lie or selling someone the New York Starport, a social conflict is appropriate, complete with Deceit attacks and social stress being dealt. Sometimes, Deceit is the undercurrent rather than the forefront of an action, and as such, the Skill may be used secondarily to modify, restrict, or complement another Skill's use.

The Story Teller needs to be very careful about adjudicating Taken Out results in social conflicts where Deceit is in play. Deceit should never create behavior that is at odds with the basic nature of the target – an honest man won't be tricked into stealing, for example, though he may be tricked into, say, holding stolen goods if he has no reason to think they're stolen.

When Deceit is most successful, the target is put in a position where his own nature forces the decision that the liar wanted him to make, much the same

AND SO, A HEAVILY-DISGUISED LEO CHASE MADE HIS WAY TO MELKOR.
E.T.A. ON MELKOR IN FIVE MINUTES . . .
MY PAPERS SAY THAT I'M A COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER FROM AGNON-8 . . .
STARBLAZER

way the compulsion of an Aspect does. An honest man won't steal, unless he feels he has to do so to protect something more important than his honesty. Some of the greatest crimes in history are perpetrated by people believing they are doing the right thing for their family or their country. Part of the reason a character with a high Deceit is going to want a decent Empathy is to know what direction to spin things towards.

Disguise [Deceit]

Deceit covers disguises, using the disguised character's Deceit Skill against any attempts to penetrate the disguise. Such disguises are dependant upon what props are available, and won't hold up to intense scrutiny (specifically, an Investigation roll) without the use of Stunts, but they're fine for casual inspection (Alertness rolls).

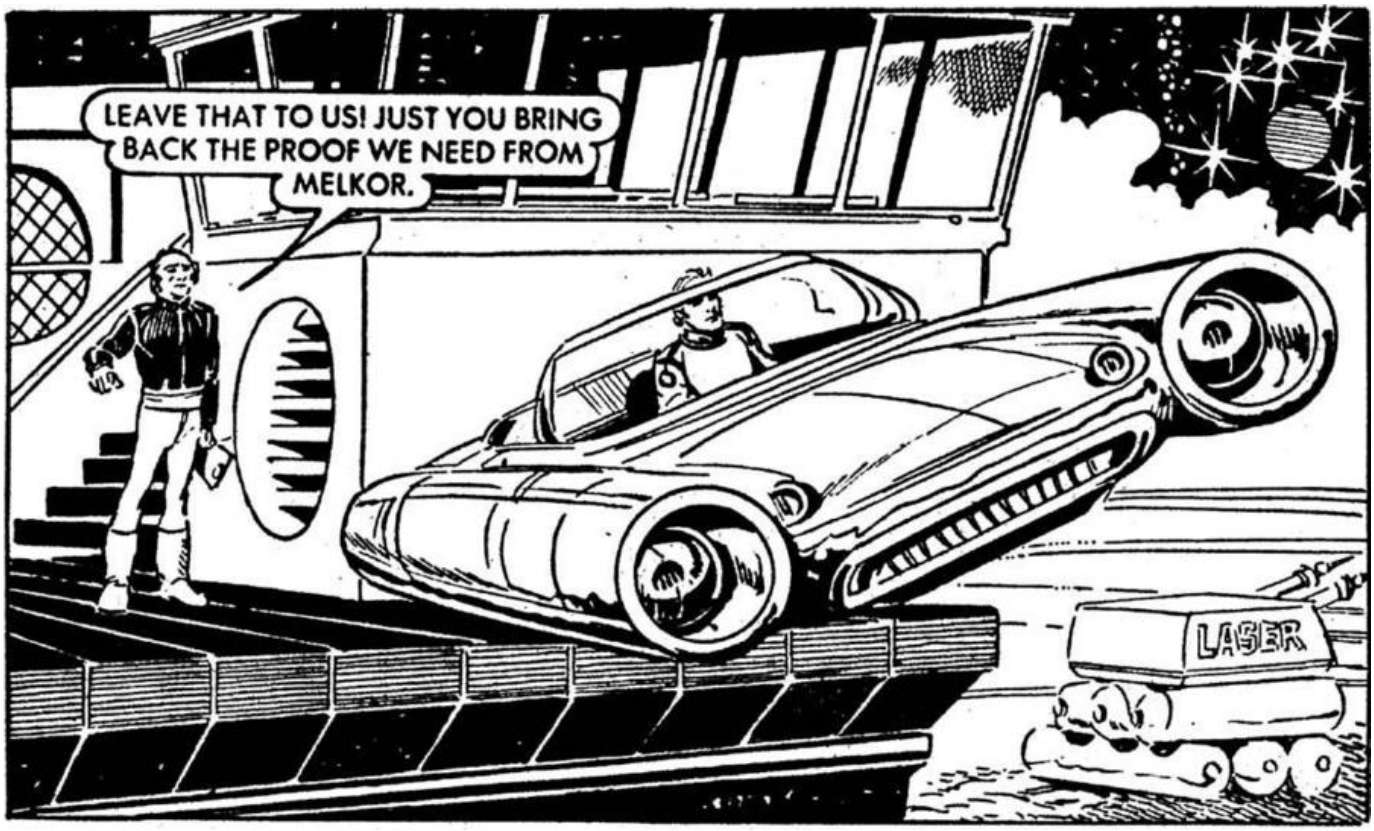
Disguises generally hold up until the worst possible moment. The trick with dealing with disguises is less about when the opposition wins a roll, and more about when the opposition is going to get close enough to use Investigate. That's the trump card, and the way to play out tension in a scene with disguises is by making it clear such a roll could happen – and so the question is whether or not it will.

False Face Forward [Deceit]

A character with Deceit may opt to use Deceit instead of Rapport to defend against another character using Empathy to get a read on him. This roll is modified by Rapport.

If the character loses his defense roll, then the Empathy reader may proceed as usual – in attempting to hide himself, the character has blundered and revealed a truth. If the character wins the roll, however, he may provide a false Aspect to the reader, sending her off with an utterly fabricated notion of him.

When a character tries to take advantage of an Aspect that they falsely think is there, it can end up being a waste of a Fate point or worse! (See Guessing Aspects, page 93)



Cat and Mouse [Deceit]

Deceit can be used for more than just dodging attention; it can be used to riposte a social query with a web of deception. When another character initiates a social contest, including an Empathy read, the character turns the tables, using his Deceit as an offensive Skill, and representing any Skills particularly convincing lies as consequences. This is a dangerous game though, as the deceiver is opting not to put his false face forward, and if his opponent succeeds, he'll hit upon the truth. However, if the deceiver outclasses his opponent significantly, this can be a powerful technique.

In such a contest, the "reader" is effectively manoeuvreing (as he attempts to win an Empathy roll and pick up a piece of information) rather than attacking, but he is acting, so he does not get a full defense bonus. The deceiver is responding in kind with attacks and manoeuvres as well, with the goal of planting false ideas on the reader. Usually, the opponent disengages after they've won the manoeuvre and gotten the information they want.

Drive

(Stunts, page 156)

Drive is the ability to operate a ground vehicle (wheeled, hover, anti-grav, tracked, water-based, submersible, *etc*). Characters with a high Drive Skill include bodyguards, racers and getaway drivers.

Drive is pretty easy to use. Trying to do something in a car? Roll Drive, simple as that. If a character is trying to do something special, like drive and shoot at the same time, Drive will restrict the Skill being used (not modify, as a high Drive Skill won't make someone a better shot).

Chases [Drive]

Cars inevitably lead to chases, one of the major trappings of this Skill. In a chase, a character's Drive Skill is used to close the distance between him and the car he's chasing (or increase the distance if he's the one being chased!). It's also used to bring quick resolution to the issues brought up by terrain and other obstacles. For an extensive treatment of car chase rules, see below.

Running Chases

Drive mostly comes up in one important context: chases! Sure, sometimes there will be rolls against specific difficulties to get out of a burning building in time or the like, but really, if a character has a substantial Drive Skill, it's so he can come away as the winner of a car chase.

So here's the first rule of chases: they aren't about speed. Sure, in a straightaway, the faster vehicle wins, no question, but that should almost never happen. Car (or any other kind of vehicle) chases end when one party is no longer in the chase, usually because they've crashed violently (and possibly explosively).

Car chases play out like any other conflict, with one or two small differences. Vehicles have their own stress track (see page 302), but they do not "attack" each other as is normally the case in a conflict. Instead, they engage in a steadily escalating series of dangerous actions, until the lesser driver is weeded out.

At each exchange in a chase, the driver of the lead ("chased") vehicle calls out an action. Even if other things are happening at the same time as the chase, this action declaration is made first, regardless of initiative. The driver declares a difficulty of his choice, and describes what complicated and dangerous manoeuvre he's performing that this difficulty matches. He then makes a Drive roll against that difficulty.

If he succeeds, he pulls it off, but if he fails, it goes less well than planned – the car gets banged up some or slips out of control, and the car takes stress equal to the number of shifts the character rolled *below* the manoeuvre difficulty (as if an opponent had rolled the difficulty as an attack).

Next, the driver of the pursuing vehicle (see below if there's more than one vehicle) rolls against the same difficulty. If successful, the car takes no stress and inflicts stress to the lead car according to the shifts on its roll as it manages to get close, slam bumpers, fire some shots, or otherwise make trouble.

Alternately, if the pursuer is not looking to damage the lead vehicle, he may roll for a manoeuvre. If he fails, his car takes stress as if the difficulty were an attack – poor driving or overzealousness has had him sideswipe a vegetable stand, or rip up his tires on a tight turn.

Eventually one party or the other will be taken out, and that should pretty well handle that – if the chased vehicle's still in motion, an escape; if a pursuing vehicle's in play, capture!

Multiple Vehicle Chases

Now, this is all well and good for when one car is chasing another, but chases are usually a lot more crazy than that – it's a lucky hero who is only pursued by only one vehicle! Usually, if one car goes down, another one is in its place, and villains are famous for having guys with grenades on just the right rooftop as the hero tries to get away.

Multiple vehicle chases usually use the minion rules (see page 226), with each car equating to a minion, and all of the pursuers acting as a single unit making a single roll. If there's a named pursuer with a handful of unnamed companions, the minion vehicles attach to the named leader normally.

However, if there are a lot of cars – say you have a named pursuer who has 10 minions – it's a little hard (and anticlimactic) to have all of the vehicles on the field at once. When you look at movies and the like, the usual pattern is that a few cars show up in pursuit, they crash, and new cars come in to take their place, and this process repeats until there are no more reinforcements.

With that in mind, when you want to play out a more extended chase that has this kind of pacing, the Chase Scene rules become appropriate.

Chase Scenes

Chase scenes occur when the players are being pursued by a large enemy force. In a chase scene, the named pursuer stays out of the chase, at least initially. Over the course of the chase, the pursuing minions come at the player sequentially, with a new minion coming in as a prior one is taken out. This continues for the duration of the chase until the pursuer is out of minions, at which point, he enters the fray and the chase is then resolved normally.

Because the pursuer is not on the field, the minions never attach, so they use their own Skill, which is often to the fleeing character's benefit. In return for this, the pursuing villain is given a few tricks to balance the scales. (Players, being heroes, don't use these rules, since they are potent individuals of action, rather than masterminds working through lackeys.)

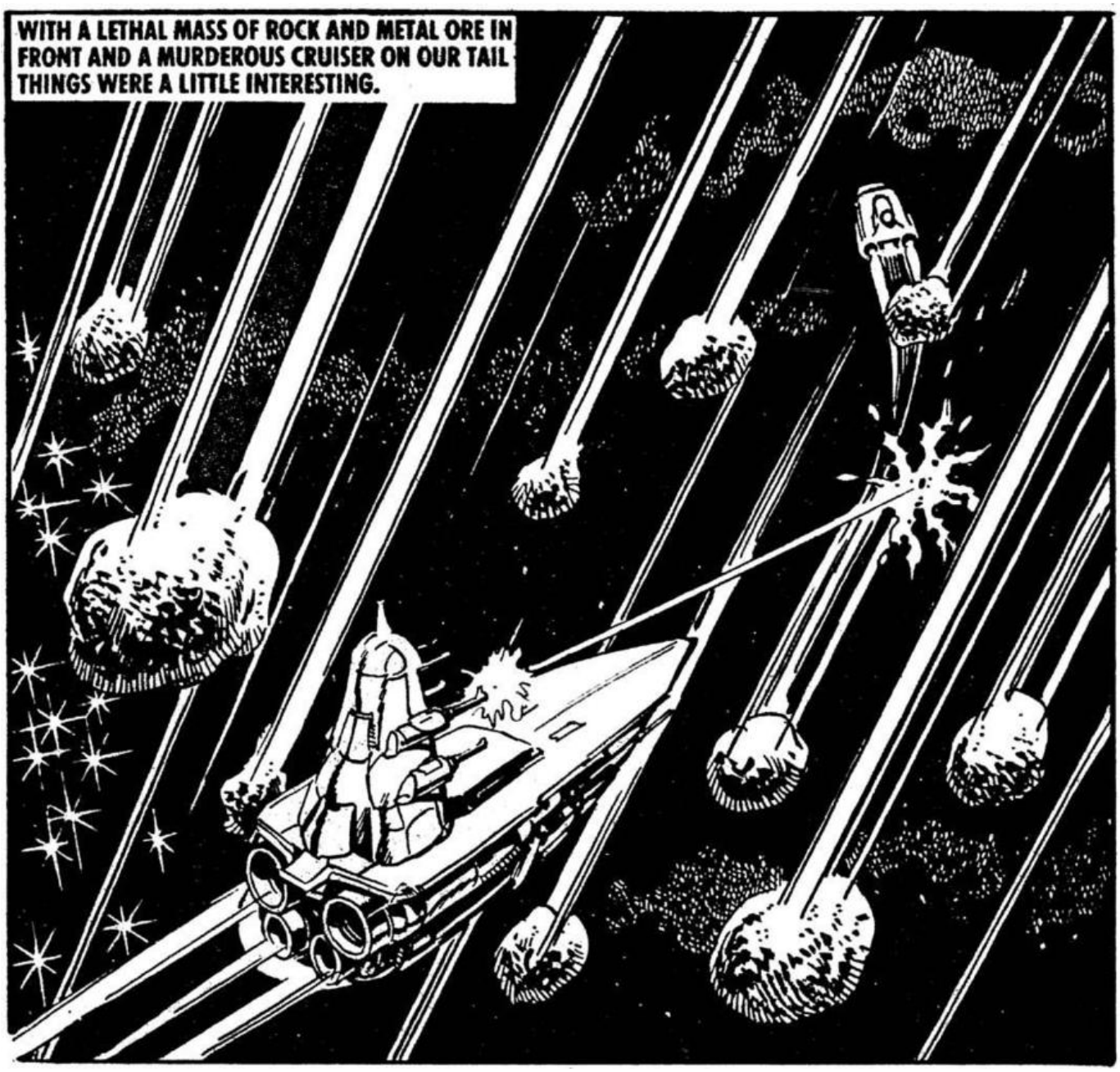
At the beginning of a scene, the Story Teller-controlled pursuer is given a certain number of points, which represent the total value of the pursuit. Five points makes for a very short chase, 10 for a one meant to be a major feature of this section of the story, and 20 can make for a chase scene that will take

up a goodly portion of the session, as a climax to the action.

The baseline use of this value is to determine how many minions the pursuing character has. Each minion costs a number of points based on its value (1 for Average, 2 for Fair, 3 for Good). At the start of the chase, the pursuer can spend as many points as he wants (up to the total value of the pursuit) in order to buy minions. He can choose to have all of these minions go after the characters now, or he can hold some of them in reserve (in which case the reserve vehicles will enter the chase one by one, as individual minions are taken out). Also, at any time there are no pursuing vehicles (i .e ., all the minions that he's bought have been taken out), he can spend points to add a single additional pursuing vehicle, which immediately enters the chase. More importantly, the pursuer may also spend 1 point per exchange for any of the following effects:

Reinforcements

Allows the pursuing character to add multiple cars at once. By spending one point, he may spend additional points up to half his remaining total on purchasing additional cars, which are immediately added to the field. These vehicles must all be of the same quality as the car already in play and each other. Adding extra vehicles allows them to get the bonus for being in a group, but has the drawback that overflow damage will roll onto the next vehicle as it does for minions (this does not happen when there is only one pursuing vehicle).



Road Hazard
The pursuers have managed to get someone ahead of the lead car and may launch an attack against the lead car, using the villain's Drive (or Pilot, when appropriate) Skill as the attack value. Other pursuing vehicles do not need to defend against this attack, since in theory, at least, they're aware that the hazard is forthcoming. This is one of main tools the villain may use to offset the loss of not involving himself directly.

Shotgun!
One of the pursuing vehicles has someone with a gun in the passenger seat, and the addition of bullets into the mix makes things all the more dangerous. Any time the lead car takes stress, it's increased by one as long as this guy is shooting. The guy with the gun can be removed when that car is taken out (reinforcements do not have a gun unless points are spent for it).

The Last Pursuer
If the pursuing villain is not going to join the fight himself, he can try to end the chase with one last, tougher-than-usual vehicle. This is the last ability the pursuer can use, and costs all his remaining points (minimum of 1). If the Last Pursuer is used, the villain himself cannot subsequently join the chase.

The last pursuer is always more impressive than the previous vehicles. Perhaps it's big and armored, sleek and black, or maybe it's something completely unexpected, like a biplane. It is always treated as a Good Minion, with one extra box of capacity for each point spent beyond the minimum.

It also has one other benefit from this list:

- +3 Stress Boxes
- +1 to Drive Rolls
- Armed – Always treated as having the Shotgun! Effect.
- 1 point of armor (see Gadgets, page 81)
- Alternate Movement – the pursuer can move in ways the lead vehicle can't (such as flying, or water). Mechanically, this means that the pursuing car can opt to avoid almost any hazard, treating it as if the pursuer automatically succeeded at the roll, but inflicting no stress on the pursuer for doing so. The pursuer is only obliged to roll if the lead car can come up with a manoeuvre that forces the pursuer to respond.

Dramatic Entrance
This is the moment when the named pursuer reveals himself, and begins the end of the chase. If the Story Teller has used "The Last Pursuer" already, this option is off the table. This costs all the the pursuer's remaining points (minimum 1) and triggers a Road Hazard for the fleeing vehicle, as the pursuer appears in a colorful and hopefully hazardous way. The stats of the pursuer's vehicle depend on the pursuer, and if he does not have a signature vehicle, he may use the same rules as The Last Pursuer, above, replacing the minion quality with his own Skill.

Once the pursuer is out of points *and* there are no pursuing vehicles left, the fleeing vehicle finally escapes.

Passengers
Each exchange, one PC or named Extra passenger may assist the driver, provided he has the means to do so. This allows him to contribute to the chase, as long as he finds a way to describe it, be it shooting at the pursuers (Guns), pushing a crate out the back (Might), or just shouting "look out!" when dramatically appropriate (Alertness). The passenger rolls his Skill while the driver rolls his Drive as usual, and the driver may use the higher of the two results. (The only limit on this is that the same passenger may not help two exchanges in a row .) Note that this is a single result, not two – for instance, a passenger who is shooting does not get normal attack results, just the ability to let the driver choose between two rolls. This said, by dint of being passengers in the same vehicle, all characters – even those not able to roll in that exchange – may offer to spend Fate points out of their own pool on behalf of the driver, so long as they supply a bit of color dialogue, e.g., "Alleyway ahead!"

Furthermore, there's nothing saying that characters along for the ride can't be doing other things that don't contribute directly to the chase. While they can only act against the pursuers by partnering with the driver as described above, there's nothing to say that your car chase can't feature the Academics guy in the back seat furiously trying to read through the book the heroes just stole from the villain's lair... just in case the guy's minions catch up with them and the book returns to its owner.

The reason for these rules are twofold. First, if all the passengers were engaging in full participation at the same time, the chase would finish very quickly and would almost certainly be less interesting. But second and perhaps more important, by focusing the chase experience around the person in the driver's seat, the driver's shtick of being good at driving gets backed up. Chases are uncommon enough that, when the opportunity to shine comes up, the driver should most certainly get the spotlight.

Empathy

(Stunts, page 158)

This is the ability to understand what other people are thinking and feeling. This can be handy if a character is trying to spot a liar or wants to tell someone what that person wants to hear. Empathy is usable as a defense against Deceit, and is the basis for initiative in a social conflict. Characters with a high Empathy Skill include gamblers, diplomats, reporters and socialites.

Reading People [Empathy]

Empathy can be used to figure out what makes another character tick.

Given at least a half hour of intense, personal interaction, a character may make an Empathy roll against the target's Rapport roll (see page 130 for more on Empathy vs. Rapport when reading people). This is an assessment action (see page 98). If he gains one or more shifts on the roll, he discovers one of the target's Aspects which he is not already aware of. It may not reveal the Aspect in precise detail, but it should paint a good general picture ; for instance, it might not give the name of the character's brother, but it will reveal that there is someone with that relationship. This process may be repeated, taking longer each time and ultimately can reveal a number of Aspects equal to the character's Empathy Skill's value (minimum one) – so, a Fair Skill (value 2) would allow two Aspects revealed through at least two different rolls.

Knowing someone's Aspects is a powerful tool, both because it allows that person to tag them, and because it gives potent insight into the target's nature. It's critical to remember that a character's Aspects are not necessarily public knowledge. While a scenario may call for compelling a character's Aspects, Extras should not be planning for that Aspect unless they have some reason to have found it out, either because the player showcases it, or because they've successfully used Empathy on the character.

When you decide which additional Aspects Empathy reveals to a player, there are two possible yardsticks. The first is showcasing those Aspects you feel are closest to who the Extra really is. The second is showcasing the ones you think would be most entertaining if the player found out about. If neither of those yardsticks work, pick the one closest to the top of the list; it's probably reflective of what you thought was most essential at the time.

Endurance

(Stunts, page 159)

Endurance is the ability to keep performing physical activity despite fatigue or injury. It's a measure of the body's resistance to shock and effort. In addition to fatigue, Endurance measures how well a character shrugs off poisons and disease (for a treatment of poisons, see page 118). Characters with a high Endurance Skill include explorers, athletes, and sailors.

Endurance is a passive Skill. Players will very rarely need to ask to roll Endurance; instead, the Story Teller will call for rolls when appropriate.

Endurance can particularly come into play in long-term actions, as a secondary, restricting Skill, where the character's ability to keep performing at peak is limited by how able he is to overcome fatigue and pain; this is why top athletes have their Endurance Skill on par with (or better than!) their Athletics Skill. Someone without a solid Endurance Skill may be a good sprinter, but will find themselves winded and falling behind in a marathon.

Endurance also determines a character's Health capacity (the length of a character's Health stress track), since Health stress represents physical wounds and fatigue.

By default, players have 5 boxes for their Health stress track. Better-than-Mediocre Endurance increases the number of boxes as shown here.

Endurance	Health
Average-Fair	+1
Good-Great	+2
Superb -Fantastic	+3

YOUR DESTINATION.
I AM DESTINED FOR THE CARETAKER, 90 POTEMKIN PROSPECT, CITY OF GORKISTAN.
OH NO! THAT'S SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BADLANDS. LADY, YOU'D BETTER FIND ANOTHER MESSENGER.
MIKAL, LET US NOT HAGGLE. I SHALL DOUBLE THE FEE.
LET'S HAGGLE. DOUBLE UP AGAIN AND YOU'VE GOT A DEAL.
SHE PAID UP WITHOUT BLINKING.
RIGHT, NOW I NEED DETAILS FOR MY FILES. NAME!
YOU HAVE THE MONEY, AND THE PACKAGE — JUST DELIVER IT. GOODBYE.

Poisons [Endurance]

Poisons are an interesting case, and one that bears some discussion, since they fall into a few categories which in turn follow a few rules.

Poisons have a potency and a subtlety, both rated on the adjective ladder. The potency determines how hard it is to resist using Endurance (see below) and the subtlety is the difficulty for any Alertness, Investigation or Science rolls to detect or analyze it – either to prevent exposure, or to determine the cause of someone's sudden ailment. Poisons also need to have a means of application, such either as food, gas or injection.

First, we have damaging poisons. Damage is used loosely here, as it may be lethal or it may mean knockout drugs or any number of other things.

Damaging poisons are often fast-acting, found on the blades of enemies and tips of blowgun darts. When such a poison is introduced into the system, it makes an attack (at its level of potency – Mediocre for a mild poison, Superb for something very potent) against the target's Endurance.

This attack occurs before the first initiative of an exchange. This attack repeats every exchange until the end of the scene (at which point the poison has run its course) or until the character somehow stops the poison, such as with a Stunt or medical treatment (or even something as mundane as inducing vomiting when appropriate). Many such poisons may stop if the player acquires spin on his defending Endurance roll (beating the attack by 3 or more).

Some damaging poisons are slow acting and kill over a much longer period of time, but those are often more appropriate for background than showing up directly in play. If you are looking to introduce a slower-acting poison, rather than treating it as a standard attack, make a roll once per scene against the victim's Endurance roll. If the poison's roll beats the Endurance roll by 3 or more, then the victim acquires a consequence. Regardless of severity, these consequences do not disappear until after the poison is cured. After three such rolls, escalating from minor to moderate to severe, the fourth will leave the victim succumbing, with a taken out result. Alas, with poisons, there are no concessions!

Next, we have exotic drugs. Rather than damaging their target, they put one or more additional Aspects directly on them (as with a manoeuvre rather than an attack). Their potency is the value which the subject rolls their Endurance against in a simple test. If the subject wins, the symptoms are passing, but if he loses, he immediately gains the Aspects as described in the poison. The duration of these effects depends upon the poison. This approach is specifically different from a slow-acting damaging poison, as these Aspects are not consequences, and thus do not push the character closer to taken out.

Lastly, we have special poisons. These are the poisons that violate the rules in some way and tend to either leave a beloved Extra in a coma, needing a very exotic cure, or will kill the person who has been exposed in a fixed period of time so they must race to find the antidote. Alternately, they may have killed someone in a very peculiar way and may prove the only clue to the killer's location.

In short, these are poisons that serve no purpose but to motivate the plot. That's OK! Space Opera can tolerate a little bit of cliché, but try to keep their use to a minimum unless absolutely necessary.

Engineering

(Stunts, page 161; Gadgets, page 80)

Engineering is the understanding of how machinery works, both for purposes of building it and taking it apart. While it is complimented by an understanding of Science, Engineering can just as easily be the result of getting one's hands dirty and having a natural feel for how things work. Characters with a high Engineering Skill include inventors, mechanics, and frequently, drivers and pilots. Engineering also includes an understanding of computer systems to manage complex engineering projects, power management, construction and design.

Building Stuff [Engineering]

An engineer with time and tools can build a variety of items. For full details on how to go about that, check out the rules for designing Gadgets (page 80).

Engineering requires a workshop, the same way Academics requires a Library and Science requires a Lab. While Engineering can have very potent effects, it's fairly time-consuming to work something up in game time. Frequently, a gadgeteer character will have multiple ranks of the Universal Gadget Stunt to help speed this process along. If the character does not have enough improvements from Stunts to buy a gadget outright, he can use the Stunt's improvements to reduce the time required.

For example, a device with 3 improvements usually requires 24 hours to make. If the engineer uses his Universal Gadget Stunt's two improvements to cover part of those improvements, the gadget will only take 8 hours to build (see page 80 for more on the gadget improvement process and timeframes). Engineering improvements do not last from session to session, so if a player wants to start play with a gadget, he should buy a Stunt to reflect it. With that in mind, you should not be giving players the opportunity to engineer for its own sake. If the pacing of the game is giving everyone time to stop by the workshop for a few days to upgrade their guns, that is a sign that you badly need to increase the urgency of the threat facing the players. Starblazer gadgetry is done under the gun, with the clock ticking down to a dire event!

Fixing Stuff [Engineering]

Engineering can be used to repair devices, given the right tools and enough time. See page 235 for guidance on difficulties

For devices that have stress tracks, the difficulty of repair is the quality of the device. Removing stress or a mild consequence takes a few hours, a day for a moderate consequence, and a week for a severe consequence. For devices that don't have stress tracks, the difficulty is based off the highest value of the device, or its resources cost, whichever is higher.

Failure on a repair roll can be made up in a few ways, retroactively. First, each additional step longer on the time chart (page 237) gives a retroactive +1 to the player's roll, up to a maximum of +4 for four steps on the table. Second, the device can be repaired on the usual timeframe, but, the quality drops by one for every point shy of the target. Both methods may be combined; a character can get a retroactive +3 to take two steps longer and drop the quality of the item by one. Degradation in item quality may mean that some of its special abilities are lost, if it has any. Subsequent efforts may be made to restore the item to its original quality, but those face a difficulty equal to the target quality, plus one for every two steps the current quality is below the target. Missing a restoration roll can only be made up by investing time, and the starting length of time on such efforts is usually a week.

If the Story Teller agrees to it, a player may make a partial repair when falling just short of the target. In these cases, the consequence on the device being repaired is downgraded in severity, rather than being entirely removed. If the character misses the roll by one, he may opt to downgrade the consequence, regardless of its severity, to a mild one. If the character misses the roll by two, he may opt to downgrade the consequence one step, taking severe to moderate and moderate to mild. If the consequence is mild in any of these cases, it is removed, but the device's stress boxes are all filled to the point of one shy of "taken out".

Breaking Stuff [Engineering]

Engineering is also the Skill for unmaking things. Given time and tools, an engineer can topple virtually any building or structure. In those circumstances, Engineering works like a very peculiar combat Skill, possibly resulting in manoeuvres or weirdly indirect attacks (like setting up a bridge to collapse when someone walks across it). See page 239 for how to use explosives.

Fists

(Stunts, page 163)

This is the ability to hold one's own in a fistfight, with no weapons available but one's two mitts and a load of attitude! With specialised training, this may include the practice of more disciplined fisticuffs, such as the martial arts of the Orient. As a combat Skill, Fists allows characters to defend themselves as well as attack. Fists fighters are also well-versed in a variety of fighting styles from all over the galaxy, and may use this Skill as a limited sort of knowledge Skill covering those areas. Characters with high Fists skill include sailors, thugs, and martial artists.

Fists are dealt with in combat (page 213).

Gambling

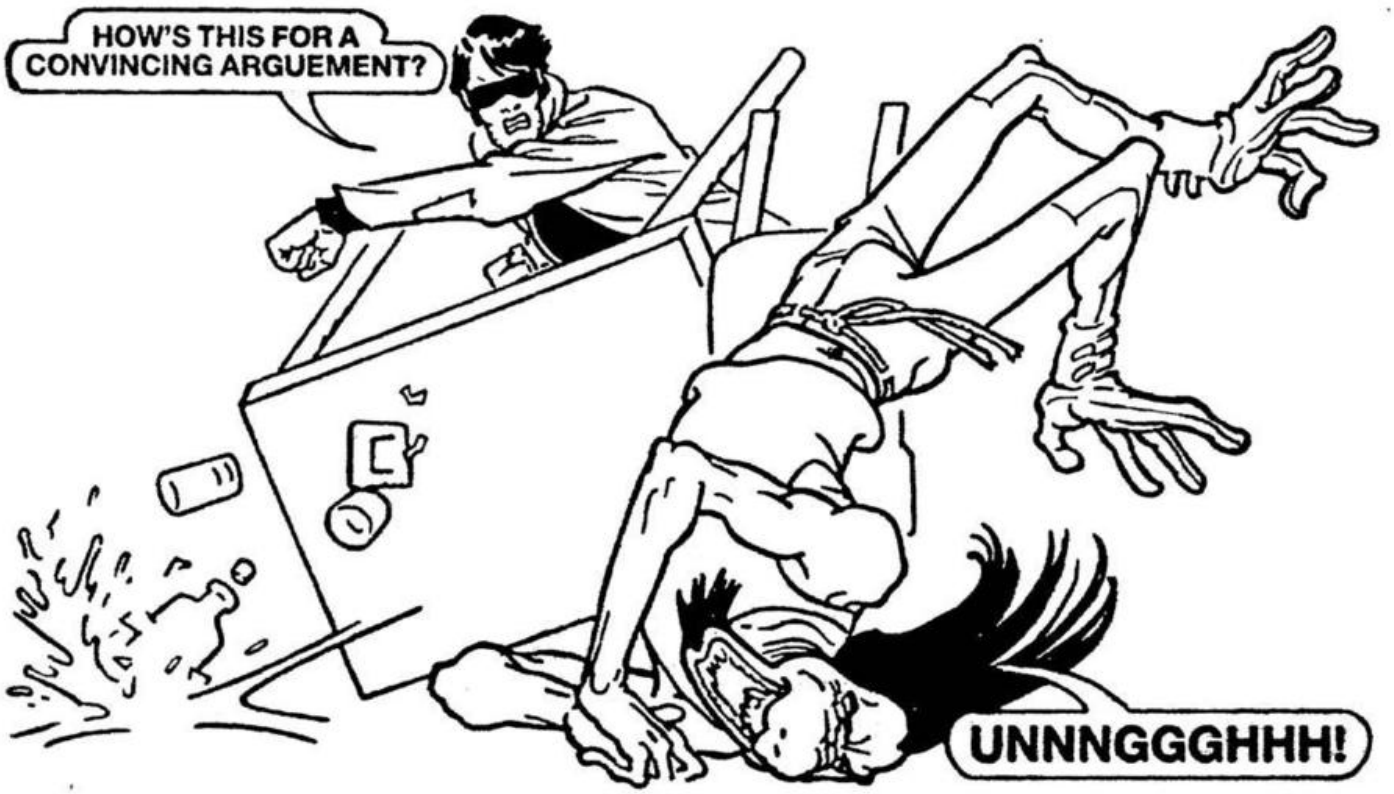
(Stunts, page 165)

Some games are pure luck, but a good gambler doesn't play those. Gambling is the knowledge of how to gamble and moreover, how to win when gambling. It also includes knowledge of secondary things like bookmaking and risk taking. Characters with a high Gambling Skill include gamblers and charming secret agents.

If a player has bothered to put Gambling anywhere on his character sheet, he's casting a vote for gambling to be a factor in your games where he's playing. Make sure to keep that in mind, and always have in the back of your head an idea for a cool gambling vignette that ties into your storyline!

Playing the Game [Gambling]

A gambler can usually find a game when he's short on cash – or just in the mood for sport. Finding a game, or obtaining an invitation to one, requires a Contacting roll (complemented by Gambling), with a difficulty equal to the quality of the game (see below). Characters with the Big Man Stunt (see page 153) can automatically find a game with a quality up to their Gambling Skill, but such a game is automatically high stakes (see below).



The quality of the game determines the base value of its pot, unless the gambler declares he's looking for a high stakes game, in which case the pot is two steps higher. However, a high stakes game also includes the potential for complications, like sore losers, or strange table stakes. Once at the table, the gambler's Gambling Skill roll will determine if he wins or loses, and if the pot is bigger than his Resources, that might be a problem.

Keep Gambling scenes simple and give a quick rundown of who's at the table, making sure to include their body language, before picking up with the gambler character and the fall of the dice. If the character beats the quality of the game (equivalent to the Resources value of what's staked), he walks out with the pot. If the issue that brought the character to the game is a vital one, this may be too quick a shorthand – or, at the least, you should be ready for a lot of Aspect use to hit the table.

Once won, the pot allows the character to make a single Resources check using the pot's value rather than his Resources Skill – assuming the pot is something as mundane as cash or easily-liquidated items of little importance otherwise. Under more exotic circumstances, such as a high stakes game, the pot may contain all manner of unusual things – maybe giving the character a useful piece of equipment.

If the character loses a game and doesn't have the Resources to cover the pot, he'll have to go into debt. Make a note of the debt on the character sheet. This is not that big a problem for most games, not even significant enough to merit a temporary Aspect – the character simply can't get into another game until it's paid off. Or rather, he can still get in, but it requires beating the quality of the game with his Deceit Skill to try to sneak in passing as someone else.

If the game is high stakes (where the pot is two ranks higher than the game's quality) then things get more interesting. If the character wins a high stakes game, the pot should include at least one odd thing, like a mysterious artifact, an unusual ship, a deed to a world, the services of someone, an ancient weapon, and so on. For games of a Good or lower quality, this item is usually just a curiosity, but for Great or better games, this item is important enough that the player takes it as a temporary Aspect, and it remains on his sheet until he resolves it, usually because you will use the item as a hook for one of his upcoming adventures. A character may only have one such Aspect at a time, so until it's resolved, high stakes wins are only worth the pot.

If a character *loses* a high stakes game, that may be very bad indeed. He marks down the debt as a temporary Aspect, but his problems are not limited to money. His debt will usually be picked up by someone important who will demand a favor or some other payment to resolve the debt. Until that happens, everyone knows the character owes someone big, and he will not be welcome at high stakes games.

Guns

(Stunts, page 166)

Sometimes characters just need to shoot things. Thankfully, there's a Skill for that. With a gun, characters can targets a number of zones away (see page 63 for ranges) Unfortunately, without a gun in hand, or at least close at hand, the Skill isn't much use.

Guns is used to cover any type of personal weapon that fires at range from bows to automatic rifles to meson blasters and strange alien energy spears.

The Guns Skill does not allow characters to defend themselves as well as attack; it trades the defense component for ability to act over greater range. A character who's both a good shot and good at getting out of the way will also want to invest in either Athletics or Fists (or both!).

Guns users are also well-versed in a variety of small arms, large arms, and ammunitions, and may use this Skill as a limited sort of knowledge Skill covering those areas.

Characters with a high Guns Skill include soldiers, assassins, and hunters. Types of guns are detailed in the Equipment chapter on page 58. Most guns give a bonus to damage if the target is successfully hit. Some weapons detail other special effects such as stunning the target, freezing or burning.

Ammunition [Guns]

One thing that inevitably comes up when dealing with guns is how many shots one has left. Thing is, aside from tracking how much clip or power pack capacity every type of gun has, counting bullets or charges is just not a valid approach, because a character may actually fire off their weapon many times in a given exchange, with the outcome summarised in one roll. To a great extent, reloading is considered to be just part of the flow of a fight and the use of the Guns Skill.

TO FIRE HIS DESTRUCTOR BEAM VARRAS HAD TO LOWER HIS FORCEFIELD.
KADAK AND PHOTOS TOOK INSTANT ADVANTAGE.
DIE . . . MURDERER . . .
SO VARRAS WAS A CYBORG. HIS EVIL BRAIN KEPT ALIVE BY A MECHANICAL BODY.

With that in mind, running out of ammunition is something that only happens when it's dramatic and interesting, which is to say, when it's something appropriate for the application of Aspects. Running out of ammunition is a legitimate compel for a character with gun-related Aspects, but even more, it's an excellent first consequence or concession, or the possible result of a manoeuvre (such as using Athletics to run all over the place, drawing fire and getting the bad guys to expend their ammunition).

If you want the flavor of a reload without the drama, simply be reasonable and request that the character take a supplemental action (basically, a -1 to his next roll) to reload after every three or four exchanges of sustained gunfire.

Certain manoeuvres such as Auto-Fire also temporarily give the character an Out of Ammo Aspect until they can find more ammo.

Intimidation

(Stunts, page 168)

There are more graceful social Skills for convincing people to do what a character wants, but those Skills tend not to have the pure efficiency of communicating that failing to comply may well result in some manner of harm. Nothing personal.

Using Intimidation is a blatant social attack, which someone can defend against with their Resolve. This is the Skill for interrogation (as opposed to interviewing) as well as scaring the bejeezus out of someone. Even without a basis for fear, Intimidation can occasionally be used as provocation, to produce a strong "burst" of negative emotional response (such as provoking someone into a fight, or at least to anger). Regardless, it's never pretty.

Characters with high a Intimidation Skill include mob enforcers, pirates, evil leaders and "bad" cops.

Threat of Violence [Intimidation]

If there is a reason for the target to believe that the intimidating character is capable of harming the target when they can't do anything about it, such as if the target is unarmed and the intimidator is wielding a weapon, it is worth a +1 bonus, +2 if the target is completely helpless. Conversely, if the target is the armed one, his defense roll is likely at +1, and can be at +2 or more if the target is very secure in their position (such as being behind something solid, or having lots of backup). If these circumstances suddenly change, it's certainly call for another Intimidation roll!

The lesson here is simple: Intimidation works best from a position of power. Achieve that position first, then apply the Skill.

Intimidation requires a reason for fear, however tenuous. This makes it hard to intimidate someone over the telephone unless you have something very specific to threaten them with. This is the most important thing to bear in mind when deciding how vulnerable an Extra is to Intimidation or how intimidating an Extra is. Without a reason for fear, Intimidation will produce, at best, annoyance, and at worst, explosive anger. Then again, that can be a goal for its use too. Regardless of whether or not there is a reason for fear, a potent success on an Intimidation roll should produce a strong emotional response – just not, necessarily, one that was intended, nor that is controlled.

Brush Off [Intimidation]

If things get to the point of a face off, there are a lot of other actions an opponent can do other than stand there and be intimidated, such as disengage or pull out a weapon. However, one of the real strengths of Intimidation is at the first flash of contact, when people instinctively get out of the way of someone intimidating. Intimidation can establish a powerful, menacing first impression. If the character is actively doing something intimidating, he may roll a quick contest of Intimidation against the opponent's Resolve. If successful, the target is taken aback for a moment, generally long enough to brush past them, though usually with plenty of time to call for help if appropriate. This cannot be done in a fight, or against any target who is already ready for a fight, but in those "first contact" situations, Intimidation is gold for control.

Investigation

(Stunts, page 170)

Investigation is the ability to look for things and, hopefully, find them. This is the Skill used when the character is actively looking for something, such as searching a crime scene or trying to spot a hidden enemy. Characters with a high Investigation skill include private eyes, scientists and activists.

It is also useful for eavesdropping or any other activity where someone is trying to observe something over a period of time. When looking for deep patterns and hidden flaws, Investigation may be used as an assessment action (see page 98).

This makes Investigation the flipside of Alertness; it is mindful, deliberate perception, in contrast to Alertness's passive mode of operation. This also means that an equivalent Investigation effort is nearly always going to yield better, more in-depth, information than an Alertness effort would; the downside is that Investigation is far more time consuming.

As with Alertness (page 102), when in doubt, set the difficulties low. You never want to derail the game because players failed to find a clue. It may seem like it makes life less interesting if there is no challenge in the Investigation roll, but this is one of those odd situations where that is not the case. A lack of information is clearly frustrating to players, and if you have a player who really savors the challenge of figuring out clues, the challenge is usually less in finding the clues than in figuring out what they mean once they're found. And there's the rub: clues don't come with explanations baked right in. Position your mystery in the clues they find, not in the clues they don't. Remember, unless there's something actually there for them to find, don't make them roll.

I TURNED OVER SEEDY'S LIVING QUARTERS . . .
ONE MESOM-BLASTER! A GUILTY MAN WOULD HARDLY LEAVE SUCH AN ILLEGAL ITEM OF HARDWARE LAYING AROUND.

When searching for something specific, the difficulty of the Investigation roll should be kept at Mediocre, with the shifts on the result being used as a yardstick for how long it takes to find the thing.

The only exception to this is if the Story Teller has a reason the thing in question shouldn't be found. In those situations, it's often better to just make the thing unfindable due to a critical missing piece that would "unlock" access to the otherwise unfindable objective (if so, don't make them roll; instead, put them on the path to discovering what that missing piece is). This missing piece could be equipment, like the computer core of a crashed alien ship, or the utterance of a certain codeword. Once that piece is in place, the difficulty should drop back to the usual level.

If characters are just searching an area for clues, the guidelines for Alertness apply. Set the base difficulty at Mediocre, and make sure that players can find *something*. Once characters find things, the burden is on you to make sure that whatever they find suggests a course of action.

Investigation can be used, in a somewhat more radical application, as the Skill to put some control of the story into the players' hands. Consider the "Declaring Minor Details" trapping of Academics – a declaration action – as it might apply to Investigation. If your group's up for it, why not allow the same sort of trapping for Investigation? This would allow your investigators to make Sherlock Holmes-like declarations, asserting minor details about a crime scene, say, and backing up the truth of their assertions with a successful roll. For more on clues and information management in a game, see page 450.

Leadership

(Stunts, page 171)

Leadership is a multi-faceted Skill. A good leader knows how to direct and inspire people, but he also understands how to run an organization. As such, the Leadership Skill covers acts of both types.

Characters with a high Leadership Skill include military officers, politicians, and diplomats

Administration [Leadership]

On a simple level, any organization which the character is in charge of uses his Leadership as its default value for any question of how organised it is and how easily it's members can be bribed. Alternatively see the Organisations chapter on page 281 for full details of how to use Leadership to influence the actions of an organisation.

Bureaucracy [Leadership]

A good leader has knowledge of organizations and the rules that govern them, including knowledge of laws, bribery and other means of dealing with red tape; this is why Leadership is a key Skill for lawyers. Leadership serves as an all-purpose knowledge Skill for knowing how to act in a given organization, including important things like how much to bribe.

Command [Leadership]

Leadership can be used to direct troops, crews, workers or any other group activity. Any time the character is in a position to give orders to a group of

NEWTON WAS CO-ORDINATING THE ATTACK ON THE RAMPAGING ALIEN FLEET.
COLONIA SQUADRON 2 . . . SECTOR 3. SELECT TARGETS AT WILL. ERECT DEFENCE SHIELDS OVER TOWNS, KAL-ADRIG AND LI-TENU.

minions, he may apply his Leadership as a modifying secondary Skill on the minions' Skill roll. In a conflict, offering this assistance takes the character's action, but can affect the minions attached to him. While attached minions cannot normally act, when they are being directed by the character with leadership, they act as if they were not attached.

This also lets you make villains who don't have much combat Skill themselves, but who can still help out their minions in a fight.

Assuming a villain has Good minions attached to himself, if his combat Skill is better than Good, then he'll usually be attached to those minions and rolling his own Skill. Characters with a high Leadership, on the other hand, can get by without any combat Skills because they can make a small quantity of Good minions into Superb (+1 for numbers, +1 for command) combatants, which is very potent.

A hero can do all of these things too, but in such situations the word "hero" is pronounced "chicken".

Might

(Stunts, page 175)

This is a measure of pure physical power, be it raw strength or simply the knowledge of how to use the strength one has. For lifting, moving and breaking things, Might is the Skill of choice. Might may be used indirectly as well, to modify, complement, or limit some Skill uses. Characters with a high Might Skill include native warriors, laborers, and powerful aliens.

Fighting People [Might]

In combat, Might can be used to help with particular applications of Fists and Weapons – if force is a very significant element at play, Might will modify the primary Skill. Furthermore, someone successfully engaging an opponent in a one-on-one exchange can potentially switch from Fists to Might, if executing a hold or other wrestling move where it's less about hitting someone as it is about overwhelming them with physical force. Such a switch would result from a manoeuvre of some sort.

Breaking Things [Might]

Might is the Skill of choice for applying brute force to break things in halves or smaller pieces, and includes breaking boards, knocking down doors and the like. Using Might, items can be damaged over time or broken with a single dramatic blow.

Given time and tools, pretty much anything can be broken. In general there are two ways to break something: methodical and abrupt.

To break something methodically generally requires no rolling. Given time and tools, you can eventually break anything. How long it will take is mostly just a matter of common sense, ranging from a few moments to saw a board, to decades to scratch through a door with a spoon. This is usually done off-screen, and a Might (or Engineering roll) might do to get a sense for how well or quickly the job is done, but if no one is interrupting or otherwise involved, it will work sooner or later.

If it's necessary to break up a methodical roll into something measurable, you may call for a number of rolls and tally shifts to get a sense of progress, but that is ultimately more a narrative convenience than a real measure of difficulty. In short, if you want to interrupt a methodical effort with things like enemy attacks, you can certainly call for a roll between each interruption, but make sure you know what those rolls mean.

Breaking something abruptly is more dramatic – knocking down a door, splitting a board with one's hands, bending iron bars and so on. That's just a quick roll against a difficulty based upon the target's nature. Having an appropriate tool (like a hammer, crowbar, or axe) may reduce the difficulty by up to two.

Breaking Things

Mediocre:	Paper or glass. Do not roll for this, unless under stress.
Average:	Flimsy wood. Why are you rolling?
Fair:	Cheap wood broken with the grain; bamboo, some light plastics.
Good:	Non-reinforced wooden board, like a pine two-by-four, or an interior door.
Great:	Strong wood, hardwood boards, exterior door.
Superb:	Reinforced wood, heavy door.
Fantastic:	Security door.
Epic:	Bending prison bars (an inch or two).
Legendary:	Bank vault door, the door of a safe, Starship airlock

In case you're curious, outright ripping the door off a jail cell is Legendary +2, and ripping the hatch off a tank is Legendary +4.

Characters can try (and fail) to break something twice without penalty; after two tries, the difficulty goes up by 1 for each additional time they try.

Lifting Things [Might]

Might also controls how much the character can lift or move. The weight of the thing being moved sets the difficulty for the roll.

Characters have a default amount of weight they can lift and still do something with that weight (like moving slowly, or trying to place it carefully), shown on this page in pounds. If purely lifting without moving – like, say, a heavy portcullis so others can scurry through – they can roughly double that capacity. For things like knockback (page 225), the weight factor (WF) is figured as shown in the table.

Might Lifting Table

Might	Capacity	WF
Abysmal	10	0
Terrible	50	1
Poor	100	1
Mediocre	150 (~Small man)	2
Average	200	2
Fair	250	3
Good	300	3
Great	350	4
Superb	400	4
Fantastic	450	5
Epic	500	5
Legendary	600	6
Each +1	+100	+0.5

A character can try to push themselves into the next category, which requires a Might roll against

his own Might Skill as the target difficulty, and if successful (the dice don't come up negative), he may perform a single Might action at the next category up. Appropriate use of tools can increase this capacity, using anything from a lever (which may grant a bonus) to a pulley system (which may outright multiply capacity).

The trick in those situations lies in the fact that the line between Lift and Break is sometimes fuzzy. If someone is trapped under rubble and you want to get it off them, if you do it carefully, that's an appropriate use of lift. If it's a moment of panic, ripping aside something heavy to free a loved one, well, then the guidelines for breaking things are more appropriate, and the amount the character can remove (lift) is based off their roll. While this may seem like a tricky distinction, it's actually very easy to distinguish in play. When in doubt, look and see if the character has any personal Aspects that might apply. If so, then this may be a moment of passion.

Pitching In [Might]

Many hands make light work, and for lifting things, it's a simple matter of adding each person's capacity to figure out the total pounds the group can lift. For abruptly breaking things, gain an additional +1 to the roll for each person helping who can practically pitch in. This is usually one or two people.

Encumbrance [Might]

This is not a game where we're going to make characters empty out their pockets to figure out exactly how much they are carrying. For the most part, day to day equipment and clothing is just not an issue. From time to time, however, a character may need to perform an action while carrying a large amount of weight, like a bomb that's ticking down or a wounded buddy slung over their shoulder.

A character can easily carry something that is 4 steps lower than their lifting capacity without a problem. Now, remember common sense applies – just because Mikal Kayn can run at full tilt while carrying 100 pounds of explosive doesn't mean he can do so all day. Trying to do so for more than a scene calls for an Endurance roll against the weight of the load, and additional rolls each subsequent scene, with the difficulty going up by 1 each time!

For each step heavier than this carrying capacity, the character takes a -1 on all other physical action, up to a maximum of -4 (-5 if they're really pushing themselves). This may also lead the Story Teller to demand that the character start performing all Skill rolls limited by his Endurance Skill.

Mysteries

(Stunts, page 175)

As people have explored the galaxy they have discovered strange, ancient and unusual things. Mental tricks, supernatural forces, rituals of lost empires, secrets of the ancients – all these and more are known to a master of Mysteries. Characters with a high Mysteries Skill include mystics, explorers, and adventurous archaeologists.

The actual use of Mysteries is fairly flexible – in appropriate situations it can serve as a knowledge Skill like Academics, a perception Skill like Alertness, or even something else entirely.

When using Mysteries to do research, think of it as Academics for crazy people. Mechanically it's no different from Academics, but the material found will usually be tracts by madmen, obscure prophecies, and dark books bound in alien skin. With that in mind, remember that libraries suitable for Mysteries research are rare and should always be colorful, and are occasionally in locations that may be an adventure in and of themselves to reach.

Sixth Sense [Mysteries]

The Story Teller may occasionally call upon a character to roll Mysteries in the same way she might ask for Alertness rolls. As the name implies, this will tend to be for things that are strange and mysterious, so predicting when it's applicable can be hard to do. Occasionally, it may allow the player an assessment action to discover hidden Aspects of a locale that are shrouded in mystic and arcane ways.

Mysteries as a sixth sense follows the same guidelines as Alertness – set difficulties low and make sure the information is something usable.

Mesmerism [Mysteries]

Mysteries can be used for hypnosis. This is more of a mental trick than anything else, useful on the weak minded when you've got lots of time to put on a show.

All mesmerism effects require a *willing* target and a roll of Mysteries versus Resolve, though the mesmerist gets a +2 on the roll if the target is actively partici-

pating (lying back, relaxing, otherwise really getting into it). Again, if the target is flat-out unwilling, it will simply not work.

Despite those limitations, mesmerism does have some practical uses. First, it can be useful to recover lost memories. A mesmerist can put another character in a trance and give them a chance to try to remember a scene more precisely. The mesmerist rolls a quick contest of Mysteries against the target's Resolve. If successful, the target may act as if he has the Scene of the Crime Investigation Stunt for the scene in question, but his Skill is restricted by the mesmerist's Mysteries Skill. Thus, if a character with a Great Investigation Skill is put under by a Good Hypnotist, the memories are a little fuzzy, and he treats his Investigation as if it were Good (Great - 1) for purposes of what he can remember.

Additionally, a Mesmerist can put a willing subject into a calming trance to help them ignore external distractions. This can be very useful in leading a panicked arachnophobe though a room full of Centaurian spiders.Putting a character in a calming trance reduces all of his perception Skills to Poor, but allows him to use the mesmerist's Mysteries Skill in lieu of his Resolve Skill (which may temporarily improve his composure capacity). The mesmerised person also leaves the decision regarding whether or not to resist an Aspect compel in the hands of the mesmerist (the mesmerist may contribute Fate points of his own to turn down a compulsion). Unfortunately, the character is also unable to take any action other than what the mesmerist directs. While a mesmerist may misuse this trust, any shock, surprise, or suggestion that the character would find repellent will knock them out of the trance instantly.

Arcane Lore [Mysteries]

Mysteries can be used in the same way Academics can, for research of exceptionally esoteric topics. The main limitation is that libraries necessary for this sort of research are few and far between, though characters may have an Arcane Library of their own if they have sufficient Resources (see page 132).

Fortune-Telling [Mysteries]

Using mysterious alien cards, looking in to mystical forest pools or dark rippling mirrors – a character can use Mysteries to try to make guesses about the future. The knowledge gleaned is never terribly specific, but it allows the player to determine if a course of action is auspicious. The character should summarise the fortune as best they can, ideally to something that could go on a fortune cookie. The fortune may be general ("The cock will crow when the thunder strikes") or about a specific target ("You will meet a tall, dark stranger") but that's the limit on the specificity.

Fortune-telling is a form of declaration. The character may, once per session, make a prediction, and make a roll against a difficulty set by the Story Teller. If the roll is successful, it's a true fortune, and there is now an Aspect that represents it. If the target of the fortune was a person, they receive the temporary Aspect for the duration of the adventure. If it was a general prediction, it is considered to be a scene Aspect on every scene for the duration of the adventure.

Fortune Telling difficulties follow the same principles as a declaration action, though with slightly different criteria for the difficulty. The base difficulty is Mediocre, and the three criteria to judge a whether a prediction can be made are specifics, presentation, and obscurity.

First off, predictions should never be too specific. To predict that good fortune will come to your family is nicely broad, but to predict that your sister will get some money is a bit too specific.

Obscurity is a complementary component to specifics. A good fortune usually is cloaked in metaphor and can be taken in a number of different ways. Saying that fortune will come to your family may be specific, but saying that a flower shall blossom in the garden of your blood is specific and obscure.

Lastly, presentation is all about how the fortune is told. Just rattling off a fortune or reading a horoscope from the paper has no sense of deep mystery. A proper fortune requires an appropriate set of props or at least a great show of ritual and incantation.

For each of these criteria which is not met to the Story Teller's satisfaction, the difficulty increases by two. If any of these criteria are outright ignored that penalty may be increased to 4 or more – in short, if your player is abusing this, you're under no obligation to help him.

Only one fortune can be considered to be "in effect" at any given moment (so no telling a fortune for each character), and it is up to players to make it come true or not. Basically, when there is a chance that some

course of action will make the prediction be true, that's when someone can try to invoke the Aspect (assuming the predicting was true in the first place – you've got no reason to tell them until they try), just as with any normal declaration. The occasional compel of the fortune's Aspect is a great way to toss a few extra Fate points to the players.

Artificing [Mysteries]

Mysteries can be used to create artifacts and talismans in much the same way that Engineering can. This requires an Arcane or Mysterious Alien Workshop of appropriate level, but otherwise follows most of the same guidelines as Engineering (see page 118).

Pilot

(Stunts, page 179)

The pilot is dashing, heroic figure even in the worlds of future, whether flying a aerospace fighter or just a commerical airliner. Pilot should also be used for characters who want to 'drive' an anti-grav vehicle that is capable of flight rather than just skimming the surface.

Characters with a high Pilot Skill are usually professional pilots, though it is sometimes the domain of the idle rich. In play, the trappings of Drive can easily apply to Pilot as well.

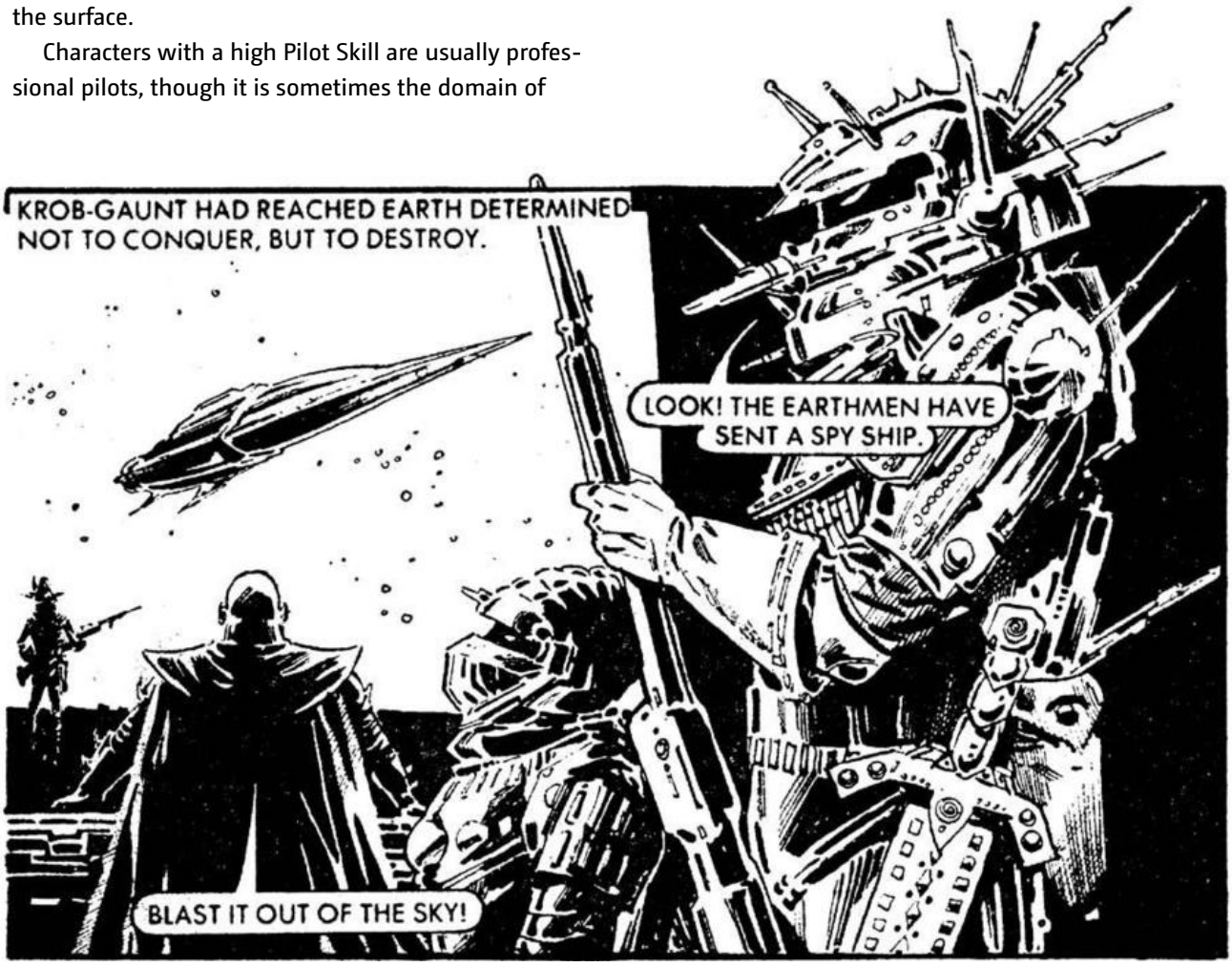
Pilots with a low Resources Skill probably don't own their own aircraft, but it is entirely likely that they can charter one. Alternately, certain Stunts may lead to the possession of an aircraft, regardless of Resources.

Rapport

(Stunts, page 180)

The flipside of Intimidation, this is the ability to talk with people in a friendly fashion and make a good impression, and perhaps convince them to see one's side of things. Any time a character wants to communicate without an implicit threat, this is the Skill to use, which makes it appropriate for interviewing. Characters with a high Rapport Skill include politicians, performers, reporters, and good cops.

Rapport is the fallback social Skill. While Empathy, Deceit, and Intimidation are fairly specific in their applications, Rapport is the catchall that covers everything else.


KROB-GAUNT HAD REACHED EARTH DETERMINED NOT TO CONQUER, BUT TO DESTROY.
LOOK! THE EARTHMEN HAVE SENT A SPY SHIP.
BLAST IT OUT OF THE SKY!

First Impressions [Rapport]

The first time a character meets someone, the Story Teller may call for a quick Rapport roll to determine the impression the character makes. The Extra's opinion of the character is going to fall into a fairly narrow band – they'll have no opinion, or they'll have a mildly favorable or mildly unfavorable opinion. Stronger opinions – friendliness, love, hate and so on tend to be based on some existing knowledge of the person, and are unlikely to change simply from meeting them.

When a player first meets an Extra, that Extra's inclination towards the player will be negative, neutral, or positive. If you need to determine this on the fly, rolling a pair of dice in the Fate style – for a negative, neutral (0) or positive result

The player can simply accept this reaction roll, or he can attempt to turn on the charm, and make a better first impression. To do so, the player rolls Rapport against the Extra's Resolve (Mediocre by default). If the player generates any shifts, he improves the inclination by one step (so negative becomes neutral and neutral becomes positive and positive remains the same .). If the player fails badly enough that the target generates some **Spin**, then the impression instead shifts one step for the worse. If the player does so well that he gains Spin himself, then it *might* be grounds for a reversal from negative to positive (or *extremely* negative to, say, merely suspicious), unless the Extra has a strong reason not to change his mind.

It's important to consider the potential consequences of Extra's reactions to characters. Maybe they'll give them a little extra help that could translate in to a bonus on a Skill check, or they might turn up as a minion later on a the result of a negative reaction.

Closing Down [Rapport]

Rapport controls the face the character shows to the world, and that includes what they choose not to show. As such, when a character tries to use Empathy to get a read on a character, it is opposed by Rapport.

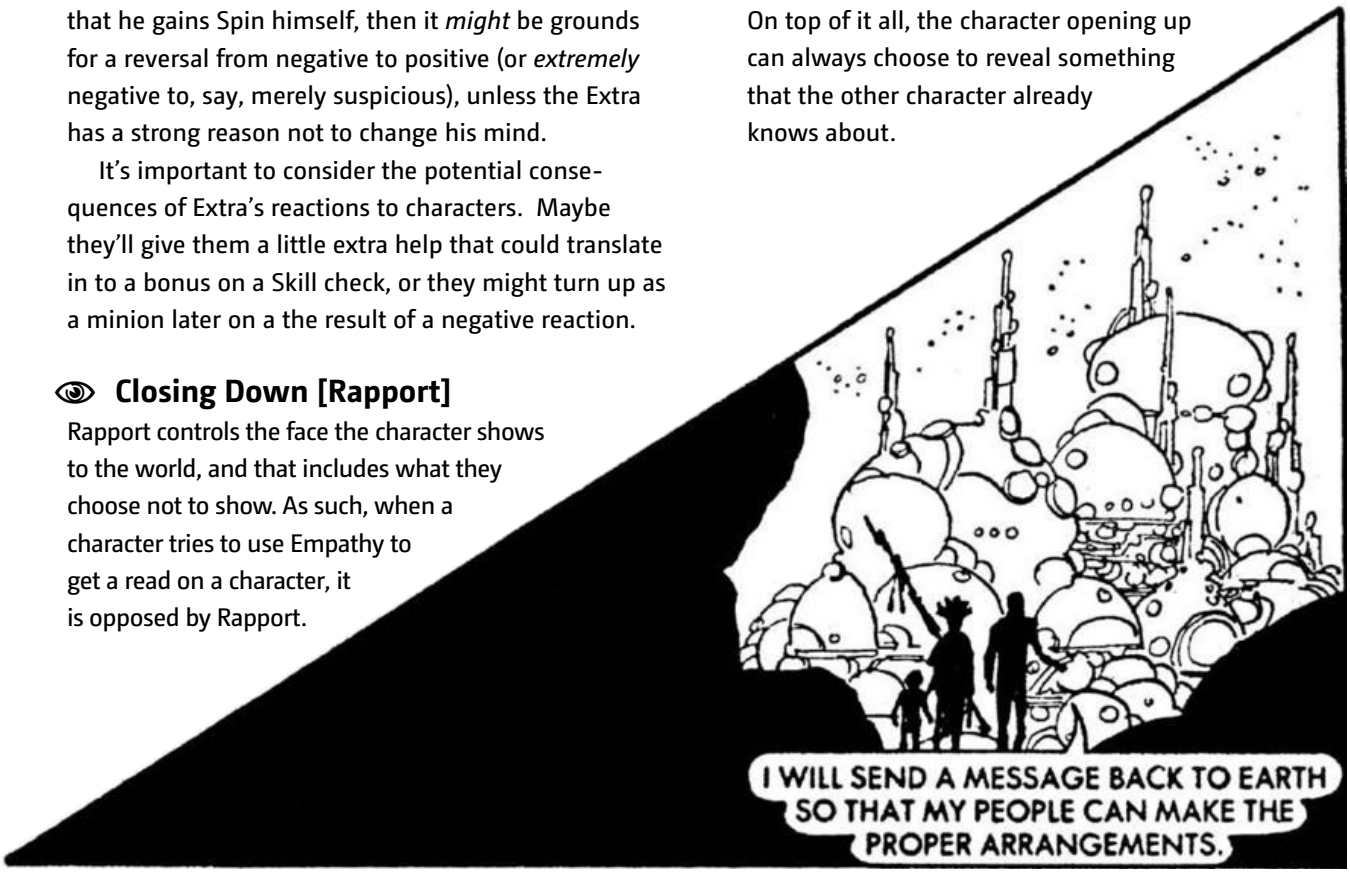
If the character wishes to simply reveal nothing, they may use Rapport and take the equivalent of a defensive action, gaining a +2 on their roll.

This is over and above the "default" of a Rapport defense because it is openly obvious: the character is wiping all emotions off of his face. It also requires that the character be consciously aware that someone's trying to get a read off of him. If the character is trying not to look like he's actively warding off the read, or isn't really aware he's being read, then he isn't taking a full defensive action, and does not get the +2.

Opening Up [Rapport]

Characters Skilled in Rapport are able to control which side of their personality is shown to others, seeming to open up while actually guarding their deepest secrets. Since true things are still revealed about the character, this is not an inherently deceptive action. When a character opens up, he defends against an Empathy read with Rapport, as usual. If his opponent succeeds and generates at least one shift, he finds something out, as usual. If not, he still discovers an Aspect – but it's one of the defending character's choice.

This can effectively be used to stonewall someone without the obvious poker face of Closing Down. On top of it all, the character opening up can always choose to reveal something that the other character already knows about.



Resolve

(Stunts, page 182)

Resolve is a measure of a character's self-mastery, as expressed through things like courage and willpower. It's an indicator of coolness under fire and also represents the drive not to quit. It plays a key part in efforts to resist torture or strange powers (see page 249).

Resolve is almost always rolled in response to something, rather than on its own. Its primary role is as defense against most kinds of social manipulation or distraction. Resolve also shines in situations which have spun very much out of control. Characters with a high Resolve Skill have a distinct advantage in continuing to keep their head about them and respond calmly. Similarly, when all seems lost, a character with a strong Resolve is often capable of soldiering on. Resolve is the mental or social parallel to physical Endurance.

Resolve also determines a character's Composure capacity (the length of the Composure stress track), indicating the character's resilience in the face of mental, emotional, and social stress. By default, players have a Composure capacity of 5, but they may increase that capacity based upon their Resolve. Better than Mediocre Resolve adds more boxes to the stress track as shown here.

Resolve	Composure
Average-Fair	+1
Good-Great	+2
Superb -Fantastic	+3

It's important to remember that a failure of Resolve should never take control of a character out of a player's hands. A bad Resolve roll affects how the character carries himself, and how well or poorly he convinces everyone else that he's unfazed by events. If a character is exposed to something disconcerting (like a fright), Resolve is useful to see how well they "keep it together" and may impact whatever penalties the character is exposed to, but how the character reacts, such as whether they run from the room, is a decision the player makes. Such decisions can be influenced by Aspects normally, but the failure of the Skill only removes control of the character when he is taken out.

One good way to handle very stressful situations or other crises where keeping your cool or otherwise keeping it together is paramount, is to use Resolve as a modifier or restriction on whatever other Skill the character is using, the same way one would use Endurance to restrict Skills when tired.

Resources

(Stunts, page 185)

Usually Resources is simply a measure of available wealth, but the specific form this takes, from a family trust fund to a well invested portfolio, can vary from character to character (and may be indicated and enhanced by their Aspects). Usually this Skill passively informs the Story Teller what the character's available resources are, but Resources may still be rolled for large expenditures, like purchases and bribes. Some large-scale conflicts may be about trying to out-spend the other guy; here, Resources can act as an attack or defense Skill.

Note: characters who have access to a fairly sized organization's resources can act as if they have Resources at Fair and, with the backing of the organization, can potentially make bigger purchases. These expenditures are tracked by the organization, and as such, if subterfuge is important, personal resources are a wiser choice.

How much specific things cost is covered below and in the Equipment chapter on page 58, but there are a few things to bear in mind when players start throwing money around.

Most importantly, be willing to be generous. Characters with a high Resources Skill *should* be throwing money around. That was the whole point of them taking the Skill. The important thing to remember is that money should be able to remove obstacles, but it should not solve problems. A fat contribution to the Mayor's re-election campaign should get you an audience with him to plead your case, but it should not get him to solve your problem for you (unless he's fantastically corrupt).

When a character is in a place where they can't draw upon their usual resources, you may increase the difficulty of making a purchase – anywhere from +1 for a modest amount of red tape, to a +4 if they're limited solely to the already-converted local currency they happen to have in their pockets. This boost to difficulty needn't indicate an increase in the actual cost of the purchase; it is more likely to represent the increased effort necessary to make the purchase happen.

Characters with a high Resources Skill include pirate lords, aristocrats and corporate leaders.

SO WE WENT ACROSS. AND THOSE WERE CARGO SHIPS FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH PRECIOUS METALS. I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES!
A MAN COULD RETIRE ON JUST THIS CRATE ALONE!

Spending Money [Resources]

The cost of items is measured on the adjective ladder and many items are detailed in the Equipment chapter to give Story Teller's a guide. Each item has it's cost listed. Characters can buy reasonable quantities of anything of a value less than their Resources without worrying about it. For items greater than or equal to their Resources, they need to roll against the cost of the thing. If successful, the character can afford the item; if not, they can't. Characters can only make one Resources roll per scene.

In character creation players can pick items with a Mediocre cost for every Aspect or Stunt they have as long as it is related to the Aspect or Stunt. See page 58 for guidelines on acquiring more equipment and services through the course of the game.

Lifestyle [Resources]

Characters are assumed to live in accordance to their means, which may mean that rich characters may not even need to go shopping. Generally speaking, if something costs two steps less than the character's Resources Skill, he probably has one already, assuming it's something that would make sense for him to have previously obtained, otherwise it's just a matter of ordering it or going somewhere the character can buy it.

Workspaces [Resources]

Part of the passive measure of Resources is the tools and spaces the character has access to. Workspaces are environments where a character can perform a certain type of work, and owning and maintaining a world-class lab or library requires a certain amount of resources.

Characters may use their Resources to set up the tools they need for their job. A character's home may have, for free, a single Library, Lab, Workshop, Library or workshop of a quality equal to their (Resources-2). As described in Academics, above, the quality of a workplace determines the highest possible difficulty of a "question" or project that can be pursued there.

For the various types of Skills which need workspaces, the breakdown is as shown in the following table.

See the respective Skills for more details.

Skill	Work	Workplace
Academics	Academic Research	Library
Science	Lab Work	Lab
Engineering	Gadgeteering	Workshop
Mysteries	Arcane Research	Arcane Library
Mysteries	Alien Research	Alien Archive
Mysteries	Artificing	Arcane Workshop

If the character wishes to have a specialised workspace, such as a workshop that can only work on guns, they may have it at a quality equal to their Resources-1 instead. Higher quality workspaces may be constructed, but will require a Resources roll with a difficulty equal to the quality +2 (or only +1 in the case of a specialised space), and will not be made immediately available at the time of purchase (though additional shifts may be spent to reduce time, as usual).

Science

(Stunts, page 187)

Not just science, but "Science!" Science holds the promise of revealing all the galaxy's secrets. This Skill represents a broad knowledge of scientific method, and includes the field of medicine and computers. Characters with a high Science Skill include scientists, physicians and hackers.

Computers & Hacking [Science]

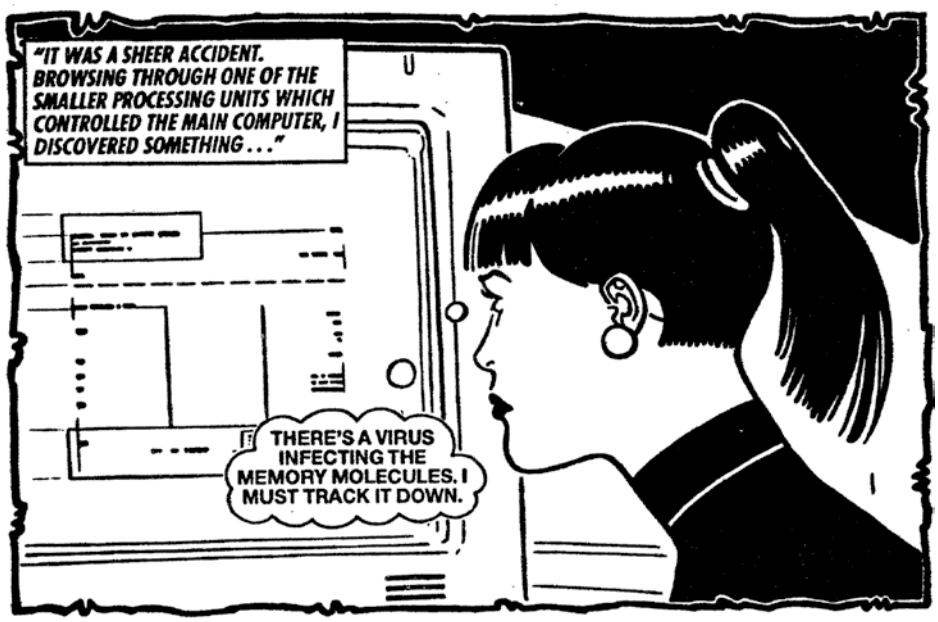
Knowing how to program computers and how to get around that programming is a cornerstone of life in the far future. Nearly everything is controlled by a computer whether it's a basic management program in a handheld gadget to a sophisticated artificial intelligence controlling the functions of a vast interstellar warship.

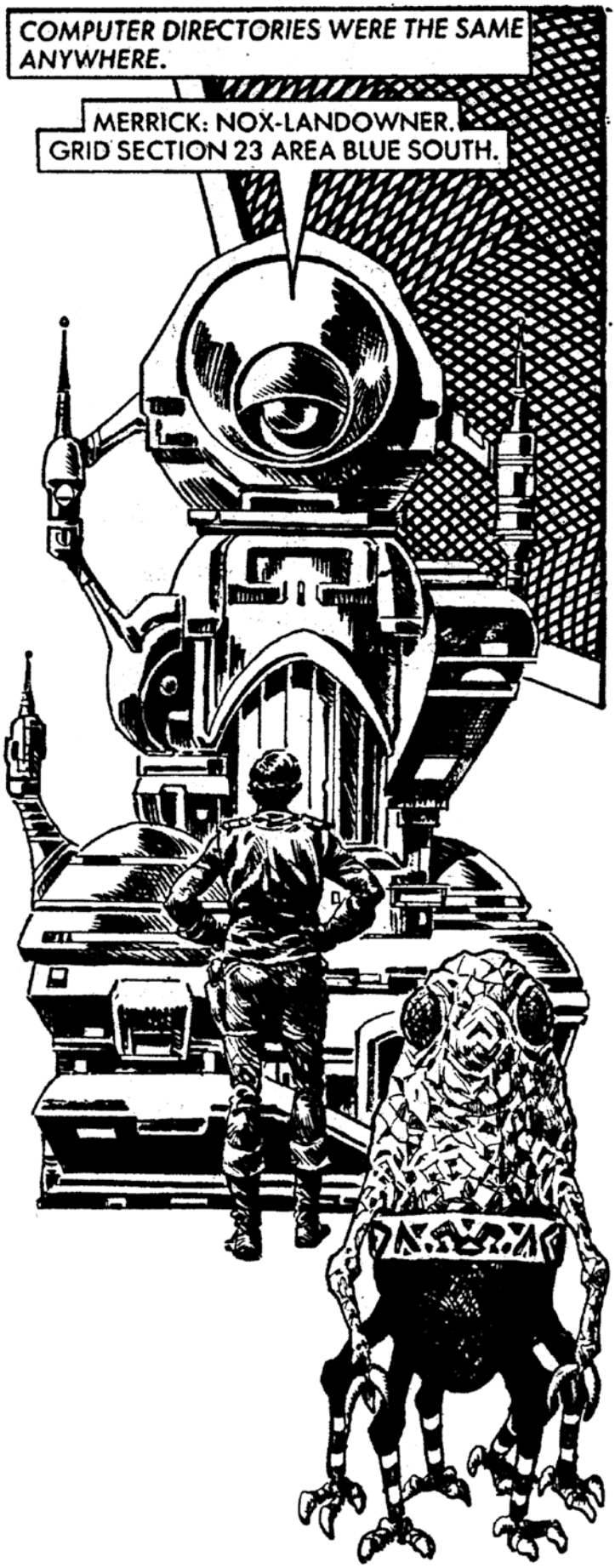
If characters mess with the programming of something or hack into a computer system you need to assign the computer software a Skill rating which is the difficulty to bypass it's security and ammend it's programming. Starships and Spacestations already have ratings for their computer system, the Starship Systems Skill which can be used for shipboard hacking. However ground based installations should use the Security Skill rating of their parent organisation. As a backup here's a guide to some difficulties.

Difficulty	Type of System
Fair (+2)	Household systems & alarms, Basic handheld equipment
Good (+3)	VIP Home's systems & alarms, factory equipment
Great (+4)	Government systems & alarms, sensitive equipment
Superb (+5)	High security systems & alarms, security services equipment
Fantastic (+6)	Military security systems & alarms, military equipment

Having to hack quickly, on site should increase the difficulty by 2, being able to hack from the comfort of your own facility or workshop should decrease the difficulty by 1.

If the hacking attempt fails on a security system the alarms sound and the system has a chance to trace the hacker. Use the Skill of the software system with the total achieved by the hacker in the hacking attempt as the difficulty. If the hacker was working from their own facility increase the difficulty by 2 as they will


"IT WAS A SHEER ACCIDENT. BROWSING THROUGH ONE OF THE SMALLER PROCESSING UNITS WHICH CONTROLLED THE MAIN COMPUTER, I DISCOVERED SOMETHING . . ."
THERE'S A VIRUS INFECTING THE MEMORY MOLECULES. I MUST TRACK IT DOWN.



have safeguards in place for just such an eventuality.

A successful hacking attempt will allow the programmer to ammend the software's core directives, change functions, alter schedules and activity, control systems and much more. The shifts generated should be a guide as to how far the hacker got in to the system and what can be achieved as follows:

Shifts	Extent of Success
0 shifts	The hacker got in but is only able to read and download information.
1 – 2 shifts	A simple change like altering the timing of a guard robot's patrol, closing or opening a security door, instructing a shuttle in the ship's landing bay to be prepped for take off.
3-4 shifts	A change involving some form of control such as turning off security camera's in an area, taking control of some automatic defences for a scene, opening a whole series of doors, turning off a tractor beam for a scene.
5 or more shifts	Complete control of the system, whatever the system is capable of, without human approval is possible. However characters should be aware that human staff, crew or casual observers may report unusual activity and possibly discover the hacking. For each out of the ordinary action the hacker makes the system do, deduct 1 from the difficulty for a Perception Skill check by an observer or staff member. The difficulty is the Skill level of the computer system.

Hacker versus hacker battles take places when two hackers are vying for control of a computer system. Simply use each hacker's Science Skill in a straight fight with the loser being kicked out of the system and losing

access. The winner has the option to trace the loser as if they had failed a hacking attempt detailed above.

Lab Work [Science]

Science can be used to answer all manner of questions, provided there's time and equipment to look into them. A scientist looking to solve a problem should figure out what question he's trying to answer, like "What killed this man?" or "What is this object composed of ?". The Story Teller will call for a roll to see if the character can answer the question. This will require a lab of some sort, and it's possible that some questions can't be answered without the right equipment. In the end, this functions the same as Academics performing research in a library (see page 100).

Labs come in varying qualities, much like libraries do, and the availability of a lab is one of the main limitations on lab work. The base difficulty should be low, with details provided by a greater number of shifts, and the information found should be something that can be acted upon unless it is specifically supposed to be frustrating.

Medical Attention [Science]

A character can use the Science Skill for first aid and more advanced medicine. When using Science as first aid in the middle of a fight, the character must take a full action with a target who's not trying to do anything else active (i.e., forfeiting his next action). Make a roll against a target of Mediocre; if it succeeds with at least one shift, the subject may remove one point of stress from his physical stress track. Every two shifts beyond the first improves this effect by one; for example, with five shifts, a character can remove three stress. Success can also be used to "stabilise" someone who has taken a severe or lesser consequence that would appear to be life-threatening (e.g., a Bleeding to Death Aspect) – in game terms, this has the effect of limiting the extent to which the Aspect can be compelled. A given person can't be the target of more than one first aid action in an exchange.

When using Science to address someone's long-term injuries, the character will need some kind of medical kit or equipment and must spend a scene providing proper medical attention. This is a use of Science to directly address someone's physical, long-term consequences. If the roll is successful, then the time it takes the subject to recover from the consequence is reduced by one step on the time table. Multiple such attempts may not be made.

The difficulty of the roll depends on the severity of the consequence; starting at moderate, the difficulty increases by two steps for each level of severity:

Consequence	Difficulty to Reduce Time
Mild	Mediocre
Moderate	Fair
Severe	Great (requires Great level medical equipment or facility)
Extreme	Fantastic (requires Fantastic level Medical facility)

At the Story Teller's discretion, when the doctor in question gains spin on his roll, the time to recover may be reduced by two steps instead of one.

Science! [Science]

Nearly anything can be explained with "Science!" It may not necessarily make sense to anyone other than the person doing the explaining, but it at least sounds authoritative, and sometimes it's even right. When confronted with a challenge, the character can apply a scientific explanation, and roll against a difficulty set by the Story Teller. This is a declaration action. If a character acts in accordance with the resulting scientific advice, and he succeeds on the roll, he gains a +2 bonus or a reroll on the action, by tagging the Aspect he's introduced. The science of this declaration doesn't really need to be accurate to the real world – it just needs to sounds scientific, and can even just be regular advice using long scientific words. Since the bonus comes from tagging an Aspect, the first one's free, and subsequent uses will cost a Fate point.

This follows the rules for Academics' "Minor Details" (and declaration actions in general), page 100 and page 98, almost to the letter, except that the fact or facts involved must be of a scientific (or scientific sounding!) nature.

Sleight of Hand

(Stunts, page 189)

The hand can certainly be quicker than the eye. This Skill covers fine, dexterous activities like stage magic, pickpocketing, and replacing an idol with a bag of sand without tripping a trap. While Athletics is appropriate for gross physical activities, most things requiring manual speed and precision falls under this Skill (that said, if you're picking a lock, use Burglary).

Characters with a high Sleight of Hand Skill include criminals, magicians, and performers.

Pickpocket [Sleight of Hand]

Picking a pocket is a quick contest between Sleight of Hand and the target's Alertness (which may be complemented by the target's own Sleight of Hand). Due to the difficulty of this sort of work, the target usually receives a +2 bonus, as if he were performing a full defense against the action. If the target is distracted by something else, he loses the +2 bonus. If anyone else is in a position to observe the attempt, they also may make Alertness rolls to spot the attempt (though they don't gain the +2).

If the player has an accomplice, the accomplice rolls a quick contest of Deceit or Sleight of Hand against the target's Alertness. If successful, they've distracted the target, and the target doesn't get the +2 bonus to their Alertness. Without an accomplice, a player is already presumed to be doing as good a job at distracting the target as he can.

Art of Distraction [Sleight of Hand]

Characters may use Sleight of Hand to try to hide things in plain sight, and may use Sleight of Hand to oppose any perception check for something that they could try to hide, misplace, or distract attention from. When a character uses this Skill to hide something, his Skill roll indicates the difficulty of any Investigation rolls to find it.

Starship Engineering

(Stunts, page 191)

This Skill covers the understanding and operation of all the highly sophisticated engineering systems aboard Starships. It does not cover general Starship systems, Starship weapons or piloting

The Skill assumes knowledge and training in shipboard protocol (who does what and how to treat them), emergency operations, escape systems, zero gravity activity and the safe use of space suits.

Starship crew having either the Starship Engineering, Starship Pilot, Starship Gunnery or Starship Systems Skills have had some cross training in the other shipboard Skills and if needed can operate those systems at -2 to their Skill level or -1 to the ship's Skill level which ever is better.

The average person does not have the necessary training to operate a Starship and so cannot use a Starship at mediocre as with other Skills. The only exception is where a ship has the AI Auto-Pilot Ship Systems Stunt and can take verbal commands from un-Skilled passengers. However these can only be simple commands like; "take me to Earth", "Fire on the alien ship", "pull that box in to the cargo bay with the tractor beam"

Characters with a high Starship Engineering skill include Starship designers, engineers and bridge officers. Full details on operating Starships are dealt with in the Starships chapter.

Power Management [Starship Eng.]

The character understands the power management subroutines, cabling and generator schematics of the ship as if it was a school energy project. With this intimate knowledge of how the ship is powered, all kinds of things are possible, especially in dire circumstances.

Manoeuvring & FTL Drive [Starship Engineering]

The character knows how the ship moves, how to stop it and how to keep it going. If bizarre spares are needed for the drives he probably knows a place they can be found, at a price. They may know how to do unusual things with the stardrive, perhaps the latest buzz of the Starport bars or what to do to get a little kick when it's needed.

Repair Systems [Starship Engineering]

The character knows the ship inside out, like a toy building kit. Where to get parts, what systems can be shut down to use spare parts for others, where the weak and strong points are, how to repair the ship in the quickest or safest way and where it can be done.

Starship Gunnery

(Stunts, page 191)

This covers the understanding and operation of all the highly sophisticated weapon systems aboard Starships. It does not cover general Starship systems, piloting or engineering.

The Skill assumes knowledge and training in shipboard protocol (who does what and how to treat them), emergency operations, escape systems, zero gravity activity and the safe use of space suits.

Starship crew with either the Starship Engineering, Starship Pilot, Starship Gunnery or Starship Systems Skills have had some cross training in the other shipboard Skills and if needed can operate those systems at -2 to their Skill level or -1 to the ship's Skill level which ever is better.

The average person does not have the necessary training to operate a Starship and so cannot use a Starship at mediocre as with other Skills. The only exception is where a ship has the AI Auto-Pilot Ship Systems Stunt and can take verbal commands from un-Skilled passengers. However these can only be simple commands like; "take me to Earth", "Fire on the alien ship", "pull that box in to the cargo bay with the tractor beam". Characters with a high Starship Gunnery skill include Starship gunners, marines and

bridge crew. Full details on operating Starships are dealt with in the Starships chapter.

Beam, Energy or Plasma Weapons [Starship Gunnery]

The character knows how to operate the many weapons systems in use on Starships and could even operate gunnery in a major ground installation at -1 to their Skill level.

Unusual weapons [Starship Gunnery]

Unusual weapons are by their nature, well unusual. The galaxy is packed full of strange and exotic weapon systems that range from destroying whole planets to sending targets through bizarre trans-dimensional rifts. Being a Starship gunner means it's likely the character would have heard of some of these weapons unless it's from an unknown species. They can operate a known unusual weapon system that they have not previously encountered or at not familiar with at -3 to their Skill level. This is reduced that by -1 for every week of training to use it. Previously unknown Unusual weapon systems require a month of research and training for every Skill level of the weapon system to use properly and people generally prefer you to be as far away from them as possible while doing so! If the character saw the weapon being used, reduce the period by 1 month. If another character has used the weapon they can teach the character within 1 week.

Starship Pilot

(Stunts, page 192)

This covers the operation of the highly sophisticated drive systems aboard Starships. It does not cover general Starship systems, engineering or weapons

The Skill assumes knowledge and training in shipboard protocol (who does what and how to treat them), emergency operations, escape systems, zero gravity activity and the safe use of space suits.

Starship crew with either the Starship Engineer, Starship Pilot, Starship Gunnery or Starship Systems Skills have had some cross training in the other shipboard Skills and if needed can operate those systems at -2 to their Skill level or -1 to the ship's Skill level which ever is better.

The average person does not have the necessary training to operate a Starship and so cannot use a Starship at mediocre as with other Skills. The only exception is where a ship has the AI Auto-Pilot Ship Systems Stunt and can take verbal commands from un-Skilled passengers. However these can only be simple commands like; "take me to Earth", "Fire on the alien ship", "pull that box in to the cargo bay with the tractor beam"

Characters with a high Starship Pilot skill include Starship bridge crew and starfighter pilots. Full details on operating Starships are dealt with in the Starships chapter.

FTL Drive [Starship Pilot]

The pilot has a working knowledge of what the FTL drive can do, and some things that rumours claim it can. Whether it's firing up the FTL drive too close to orbit, or whilst on land, or utilising the drive technology (see page 322 for examples) to do something unusual the pilot can probably figure out a way to do it.

For example, starting the FTL drive

- before the ship has reached safe distance from a planetary body should be a Superb difficulty,
- inside a space station should be a Fantastic difficulty
- inside a planet's atmosphere should be an Epic difficulty
- whilst on land should be a Legendary difficulty

Only a ship with a pilot of greater Skill than the FTL Drive can attempt this. If they fail the difference in the Effort and the difficulty will cause damage to the ship AND to the location where the ship was when it started its FTL drive as follows:

Missing the target by...	Causes...
1	A Minor consequence to the ship and location
2-3	A Major consequence to the ship and location
4—5	A Severe consequence to the ship and location
6 or more	An Extreme consequence to the ship and location

If the pilot can think of something unusual to do with the ship, assign a difficulty based on what they want to do with the same potential consequences if they fail the Skill roll as above.

Manoeuvring Drive [Starship Pilot]

The pilot is adept as using the manoeuvring drive to get around when not using the FTL drive. Whether it's parking against a space station's docking tube or flying through the asteroid rings of a gas giant it's all fairly common tasks.

If the pilot has to undock quickly, dodge on-coming asteroids or other unusual negation hazards then assign a difficulty to the hazard. For example it could be a Average (+1) task to undock a cruiser from a naval space station in a hurry or a Fair (+2) task to dodge through a gas giant's ring system against oncoming asteroids whilst being pursued by an enemy. Basically take the normal task and add +1 to the difficulty for every thing which makes it harder. For example flying through a ring system is normal but being pursued adds +1 and having to dodge on-coming asteroids adds +1 making it a Fair (+2) task.

Navigation [Starship Pilot]

The pilot has a good knowledge of known galactic geography and the dangers to avoid, the shorts cuts that exists, exclusion zones and other political boundaries that need to be considered when planning journeys.

Normal navigation does not require any Skill checks unless the pilot is trying to use the star drive to jump to an unusual location (as determined by the Story Teller). This could be dangerously near a black hole, or in to a space anomaly, amongst a dense concentration of stars or worlds. In this case the pilot must make a Skill check with the difficulty being the Skill level of the distance shown on the distance and range table on page 313. Any shifts generated can be used to put the ship closer to an exact desired arrival point, whilst a failure indicates how close to a hazard the ship ended up. Story Tellers should use the difference as a guide to how much danger the character's ship is in, using the same table seen under FTL Drive, above, page 139.

Starship Systems

(Stunts, page 194)

The understanding and operation of all the highly sophisticated systems aboard Starships. It does not cover Starship weapons or engineering (power, stardrive & manoeuvring drives systems and repair systems).

The Skill assumes knowledge and training in shipboard protocol (who does what and how to treat them), emergency operations, escape systems, zero gravity activity and the safe use of space suits.

Starship crew with either the Starship Engineering, Starship Pilot, Starship Gunnery or Starship Systems Skills have had some cross training in the other shipboard Skills and if needed can operate those systems at -2 to their Skill level or -1 to the ship's Skill level which ever is better.

The average person does not have the necessary training to operate a Starship and so cannot use a Starship at mediocre as with other Skills. The only exception is where a ship has the AI Auto-Pilot Ship Systems Stunt and can take verbal commands from un-Skilled passengers. However these can only be simple commands like; "take me to Earth",

"Fire on the alien ship", "pull that box in to the cargo bay with the tractor beam".

Characters with a high Starship Systems Skill include Starship crew and bridge officers. Full details on operating Starships are dealt with in the Starships chapter.

Communication Systems [Starship Systems]

The character can operate all ships communications including internal ships comms, ship to ship comms, planetary comms and long range (FTL) comms. Not all ships will have all of these (fighters for example have no use for internal ships comms). The comms ability of the ship is determined by its *Ship Systems* Skill level. Use the *Distance and Range* table on page 313 to determine the range of the comms system based on its Skill level. Attempts to break through interference or jamming to comms are made against this, see page 325 for more information.

Life Support System [Starship Systems]

The character is trained in managing the life support systems of the ship and is able to effect basic repairs at -1 to their Skill level covering stress damage and up to Minor Consequences simply by managing the power and redundant systems controlling life support aboard ship.

Sensor suite [Starship Systems]

The character is trained in operating the ship's sensor suite and advanced sensor suite if it has one. The character may use their Skill in place of the ships Ship System Skill to make Sensor Skill checks however this does not affect the range of the sensors. See Sensor Suite on page 321 for more information.

Ships Computer [Starship Systems]

The character is trained in managing the ship's computer and handles any repair tasks where ship system damage or consequences have been taken. Use the ship repair rules on page 359 for repair times, costs and difficulties.

Electronic Warfare Suite [Starship Systems]

The character is trained to operate the Electronic Warfare suite and can use their Skill in place of the ship's EWS Skill to make attacks and defend against enemy EWS attacks. See page 325 for more information on Electronic Warfare Suite's.

Other non-combat systems [Starship Systems]

The character will have basic experience in handling other general ship's systems such as Mining, Salvage and Grappling equipment aboard ship.

Stealth

(Stunts, page 194)

This is the ability to remain unseen and unheard. Directly opposed by Alertness or Investigation, this ability covers everything from skulking in the shadows to hiding behind a door. Characters with a high Stealth Skill include burglars, assassins, scary aliens and sneaky children.

Stealth really depends on conditions. First and foremost, if someone is actively watching the character, there's no way to start sneaking. Beyond that, Stealth is greatly affected by the environment.

Bonus	Environment
+4	Pitch black, no visibility
+2	Dark, smoke, thick fog, no clear line of sight, greatly diminished visibility
0	Dim lighting, cluttered line of sight.
-2	Good Lighting, clear line of sight
-4	Bright lighting, clear area

If you're not certain how to handle something, treat it as a half step. For example, if an alien is hiding in the dark (+2), but the guards have torches, reduce the bonus to only +1. Also note, these are all matters of visibility. Extreme noise can grant an extra +1, while total silence might impose an additional -1 penalty.

Stealth is usually a quick contest between Stealth and Alertness, though anyone who is "on alert" gains a +2 to their Alertness (as if they were making a full defense). Usually, Investigation isn't in use because

there's no active searching effort. Simply being on guard does not equate to being on alert – there must be some reason for a heightened sense of alert, and it can only be sustained for so long before boredom sets in again.

Hiding [Stealth]

When a character is hiding, he's remaining perfectly still and (hopefully) out of sight. Lighting, obstacles and other environmental factors can affect the player's roll, and the result of his Stealth roll is the basis for any contest with a searcher's Alertness or Investigation Skills, whichever is higher. If someone is actively searching for a hidden character, they use Investigation rather than Alertness and gain a +2 on the roll so long as they have some reason to actually be looking and are taking the time to do a thorough search in the right place. When someone is searching you can usually assume they'll do logical things like turn on the lights or otherwise do things to put penalties on any attempt to hide. The +2 is not available without reason or time, and lacking both will often set things back in the realm of Alertness.

This means that if a stealthy character is ever in a position where people are actively searching for him, he's in a lot of trouble. That usually requires that the character was spotted or somehow set off an alarm – which, if he's doing his job, he wasn't, and didn't.

For example, consider a character hiding in a storeroom. If a guard opens the door, shines a torch in, and looks around, it's just a quick Investigation roll (reason, perhaps, but not time), and the character can probably stay hidden. If the guard flips on the lights and starts methodically going through the room, hiding is much, much more difficult – he's imposed some penalties, and he has both reason and time.

The good news is that this sort of searching is usually obvious, so when the guard flips on the lights and starts looking, it's the player's cue to act now or give up his chance at surprise.

Skulking [Stealth]

Skulking is the art of moving while trying to remain unnoticed. It uses many of the same rules as Hiding, but is somewhat more difficult for obvious reasons.

When a character tries to move while remaining unseen, anyone looking for him gains a +2 bonus for each zone he moves. Within a conflict, normally, moving at more than a cautious creep or a walk will automatically break stealth, so this is usually limited to a one-zone move. As a rule of thumb outside of conflict, observers are at +2 for a cautious creep, +4 for walking pace, +6 for a jog and +8 to run.

Ambush [Stealth]

While we can be sure that heroes would never strike an opponent from ambush, they may end up on the receiving end of such nefarious actions! When a strike is made from ambush, the target gets one last Alertness check to see if he notices something at the last moment. On a success, the target(s) can defend normally. If that Alertness roll fails, the attack is made with the target's first defense roll at Mediocre.

Survival

(Stunts, page 196)

Survival is a very broad Skill covering virtually every sort of outdoor activity from wilderness survival to animal handling. Characters with a high Survival Skill include explorers, hunters, scouts, and barbarian lords.

Animal Handling [Survival]

Survival also covers the breadth of interaction with animals, from training them to communicating with them, albeit in a limited fashion. This includes handling beasts of burden and carriage animals, as well as common pets. Survival serves as a stand-in for all social Skills when dealing with animals. Not to say animals are great conversationalists, but when one is trying to soothe or stare down an animal, Survival is the Skill to roll.

Most animals will act in a specific way in any given situation. How an animal responds to a person is very much like a first impression (see Rapport). If the animal has been trained, like an attack dog, then not much is going to change it's mind, but if it really could go either way, Survival can be rolled against the creature's Resolve to see if the impression is favorable or unfavorable. If the animal is potentially hostile, a friendly result means it's not likely to attack. If the animal is potentially useful (such as with riding), a friendly roll is necessary to get it to work.

Riding [Survival]

The horse and other assorted riding beasts of the galaxy occasionally need riding across deserts and through time-forgotten ruins. The Survival Skill may be used for riding animals, and should operate much as Drive does when it comes to chases.

Survival also covers the basics of riding. Characters looking to be accomplished horsemen should consider the Hands Free Stunt from Survival (page 197), but for getting by and not falling off a horse, Survival does the job. Whether the character personally commands a mount may be subject to character concept or judicious application of the Resources Skill. Truly exceptional mounts are the domain of Stunts.

Camouflage [Survival]

Survival can be used to construct blinds and other ways to help remain hidden outdoors. On a Mediocre roll, a character can build a blind or otherwise create a place to hide, which lets Survival modify Stealth rolls. Such a construction takes a few hours to build, and will last a day, plus one extra day per shift.

Scavenging [Survival]

If characters need to scrounge up something from the wilderness – sticks, bones, sharp rocks, vines that can serve as rope and so on – they can roll Survival to find these things. The difficulty for finding something is based off how likely it is to be found and how interesting it will be to use. The base likelihood depends on the environment and what's being looked for. If it makes sense that it could be there (like wood and vine in a forest) then the difficulty is Mediocre. If it's a bit of a stretch, but still possible (decent wood in a swamp) then the default is Good, and if it's less likely or simply outright rare, it's Superb or higher. Each qualifying criteria increases the difficulty by 1. Thus, if a character needs sticks in a forest, the difficulty is Mediocre, but if he needs sticks of a certain size and strength (2 criteria) the difficulty is two steps above Mediocre, or Fair (+2). If the character is trying to build something, like a trap, it's an Engineering roll, modified by Survival.

Weapons

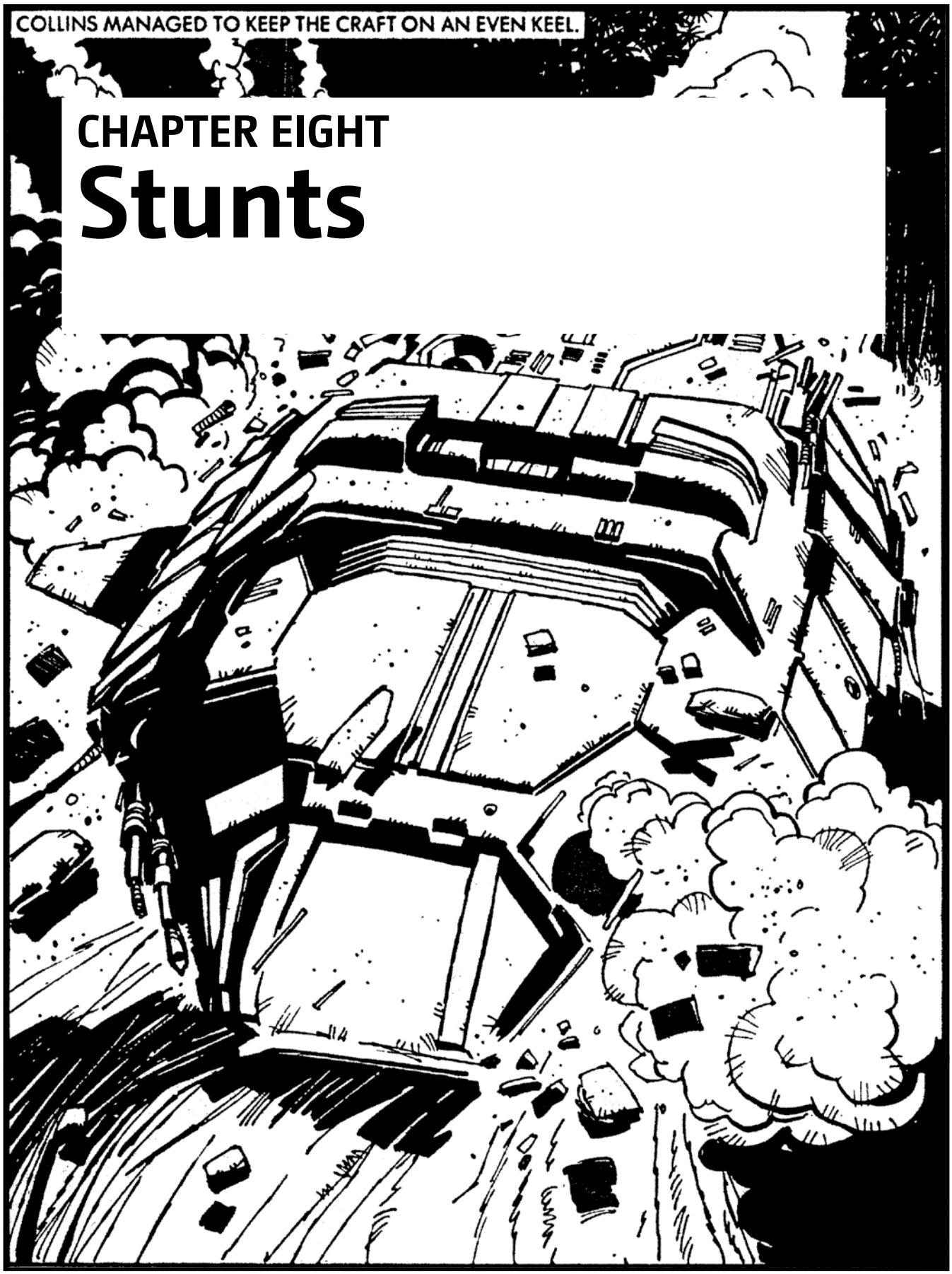
(Stunts, page 198)

This is the Skill for fighting with weapons, from swords to knives to axes to clubs to whips and energy swords. This covers everything from fencing in grand imperial courts to naval sailors using knives in the Starport alleyways.

The Weapons Skill also covers the ability to throw small handheld weapons up to one zone away, or to use weapons (like a whip) with unusually long reach to attack adjacent zones, so a character would use this Skill to be a good knife fighter and knife thrower.

As a combat Skill, Weapons inherently carries the ability to defend oneself in a fight and as such, may be rolled for defense. Weapons users are also well-versed in a variety of fighting styles and weapons, and may use this Skill as a limited sort of knowledge Skill covering those areas.

Characters with high Weapons include marines, nobles, barbarians and some kinds of athletes and circus performers. Weapons provide bonuses to damage on a successful hit or have a special effect such as stunning the target, see page 231 for more details.



CHAPTER EIGHT
Stunts

What Stunts Do

Stunts exist to provide guaranteed situational benefits, special abilities or minor powers, under particular circumstances.

A Stunt may grant a character the ability to use a Skill under unusual circumstances, such as using it in a broader array of situations, substituting it for another Skill, or using it in a complementary fashion to another Skill. A Stunt might allow a character to gain an effect roughly equal to two shifts, when used in a specific way, or otherwise grant other small effects. Put more simply, Stunts allow the usual rules about Skills to be broken – or at least bent.

Some Stunts may have prerequisites (other Stunts or even Aspects). Particularly potent Stunts may also require the use of a Fate point in order to activate. In general, a character should not take a Stunt tied to a Skill he does not have at least at Average.

What follows is not a comprehensive list of Stunts. Story Tellers (and players under Story Teller supervision) are encouraged to create their own to fit their game. The important thing to keep in mind is that entry level Stunts – without prerequisites – are the baseline; if the effect of the Stunt is really unusual or particularly potent, it may be somewhere down the line of a chain of Stunts.

The Stunts in this chapter are presented Skill by Skill, and under each Skill they are further divided into thematic groups. Each group usually has one or more "entry level" Stunts – ones that don't have prerequisites – and several which require one or more of those entry level Stunts to be taken first.

When building a character quickly, take a look at these groups – you may find it easiest to simply take all the Stunts within a group, as they are all thematically similar, and can quickly establish your character's niche. As mentioned in Character Creation, characters start with half as many Stunts as they have Aspects. Characters may be able to gain additional Stunts as the game progresses.

In order to help separate the Stunts from the Skill and category headings, you'll see a star symbol ✧ next to each Stunt listed.

Academics

(Skill, page 100)

Languages

✧ Linguist [Academics]

Normally, someone may only speak a number of additional languages equivalent to the value of his Academics Skill. With this Stunt, your character may speak five additional languages.

✧ Computer Expert [Academics]

With this Stunt the character can program and hack computer systems, substituting their Academics skill for their Science skill.

✧ Gift of Tongues [Academics]

Requires Linguist.

There is no "mainstream" galactic language you cannot read or speak – no need to pick your languages. In addition, you may use your usual language "slots" to read and speak languages you have no business having learned, such as languages from long forgotten alien races of extradimensional origin, etc.

Your slots remain increased by the Linguist Stunt, so someone with Average Academics and these two Stunts can speak every normal language in the civilisation you are part of, plus six (1+5) very unusual ones. The Linguist Stunt may be taken multiple times in order to increase this number.

Memory

✧ Walking Library [Academics]

The character's prodigious reading has paid off, and he is able to recall minute details from even the most obscure literary works from across galactic cultures. The character is always considered to have a digital library on hand of a quality equal to his Academics Skill, enabling him to answer questions with a base difficulty less than or equal to his Academics Skill, using nothing other than his brain and some time for contemplation. Additionally, any research performed by this character in a real library automatically takes one unit less time (see "Taking Your Time" on page 238), and any libraries with a quality less than his Academics Skill do not limit the difficulty of the question asked, as they normally would.

✧ Photographic Memory [Academics]

Requires Walking Library.

If you've read it, you remember it. If the answer lies in something you've read before (this must be reasonable), then any research effort takes an additional two units less time – stacked on top of the benefit of Walking Library, this means that a half hour's worth of research in digital works or real books you've already encountered can be resolved in a matter of seconds, and a day's worth covered in a mere hour. See the time table on page 237 for more.

✧ Studied Recall [Academics]

Requires Photographic Memory.

Your photographic memory extends outside of books and digital works. Once per scene, you may **spend a Fate point** and roll Academics against a difficulty of Mediocre. Each shift you generate may be used to specify a target that you wish to memorize as you might a book – returning later, in your mind, to assess new details (using an appropriate perception Skill, usually Investigation).

This ability differs from Investigation's Eye for Detail Stunt in that Eye for Detail covers the entire location, after the fact, whereas Studied Recall requires you to specify which individual pieces of a location you are studying, while you are still in that location.

Scholarship

✧ Scholar [Academics]

Your character is a respected authority in a specific academic field. Possibilities include history, archeology, astrophysics and so on. In the elite circles of that particular field, you are recognized for your expertise. Even if your Skill level is low, it merely means you are towards the bottom of that particular group of the elite.

When you make an Academics roll pertaining to your general area of expertise, you automatically receive a +1 bonus. Beyond this, you should pick a specific specialization within that area (like ancient Centaurian history, or cryptography). When an Academics roll involves that specialization, you gain

IT'S A WAR MACHINE.
IT SEEMS THAT THESE PEOPLE WERE AT WAR WITH STENTOR II. FROM WHAT I CAN MAKE OUT THE WAR USED UP ALL THEIR RESOURCES. THAT WAS MANY HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO.

an additional +1 bonus (for a total +2 to the value of the research effort).

Any research efforts involving the specialization take one unit less time; this may be combined with Walking Library, in the Memory group of Stunts, for lightning-fast research. When taking part in an academic conference or otherwise interacting with others in the field, you may use Academics to complement your social Skills (Rapport, Empathy, Deceit, etc). Your Skill is considered elevated by these bonuses, so someone with Good Academics, acting in his area of specialization, would complement Skills as if his Academics were Superb (Good+2).

This Stunt may be taken more than once, each time for an additional field. The bonuses may not overlap, however.

✧ Dizzying Intellect [Academics]

Requires Scholar.

Your area of knowledge is so advanced, there's usually no one around who can tell if you're making things up. Whenever your area of expertise (as defined when you took the Scholar Stunt) comes to bear, and you would use Academics to modify Deceit, you may use your Academics Skill instead of Deceit, gaining its full value rather than a simple +1. If you've taken Scholar multiple times, this Stunt applies to all covered areas.

✧ It's Academic [Academics]

Requires Scholar.

Your specialized knowledge gives you flashes of insight into all manner of things.

Once per session, you can use this ability when you are about to perform an action which your academic field touches upon. The connection can be tenuous, provided you can explain to the Story Teller how it might apply.

Make a declaration attempt as described under "Declaring Minor Details" (see page 100). If you get at least one shift, you successfully declare one Aspect; for every two shifts you gain beyond the first, you may declare one additional Aspect about the subject in question (so two Aspects total at 3 shifts, three Aspects total at 5 shifts, etc). If you opt to declare only one Aspect in total, you may instead convert these additional shifts into non-Aspect facts.

Alertness

(Skill, page 102)

Reflexes

✧ I'm On Top Of It [Alertness]

You may **spend a Fate point** to go first in an exchange, regardless of your initiative. If multiple people with this Stunt exercise this ability, they go in turn of their normal initiative, before those who don't have the Stunt get a chance to act. If the exchange has already started, and you have not yet acted, you may instead **spend a Fate point** to act next, out of the usual turn order.

This may only be done between character's actions, and cannot be done as an interruption of any kind (so if you spend the Fate point to do this while someone else is acting, you must wait until they're done). Your character must not have acted yet in the exchange in order to use the ability in this way. If your character's turn has passed, and you elected to hold your action, then there's no need to activate this Stunt; use the Held Action rules normally (page 217).

✧ Ready for Anything [Alertness]

Requires I'm On Top Of It.

The character's senses are so keyed into minute changes that he is able to respond more quickly to new details. The character's Alertness Skill is considered to be one higher for purposes of determining initiative (allowing someone with Superb Alertness to have Fantastic initiative). This Stunt breaks ties whenever facing opponents with the same initiative. This Stunt may be taken multiple times, each time increasing the character's initiative one step.

✧ Cut Off [Alertness]

Requires On Top Of It.

The character's always watching for his opponents to try to get something past him, and can cut that option off, even when he fails in his primary effort against them. Whenever your character attacks an opponent (or performs an attack-like manoeuvre), then no matter how well the opponent rolls on his defense, the opponent does not generate spin, and thus can't provide a +1 in his side's favor (see page 230).

✧ Run Interference [Alertness]

Requires Ready for Anything.

Normally, a character who has held his action cannot interrupt another's action at all; he must allow the action to finish before acting. If your character has this Stunt, you may bend that rule.

Whenever you choose to hold your action, you may **spend a Fate point** before someone acts to have that person truthfully declare what he is about to do. You may then use your held action to Block (see page 217) the action your target has declared, using whatever Skill is appropriate to create the Block. If you are not opting to Block the effort, you may not use your held action before your target, and your target may proceed. If you commit to performing a Block action regardless of what your target declares, before he declares it, you do not need to spend the Fate point. Be clear about this when you make your demand!

Regardless, if you do act and your most recent target then changes his mind based on that Block, he must do so as a supplemental action (page 218), putting him at a -1. If he continues his declared course of action despite what you did, he must overcome the Block.

Vigilance

✧ Danger Sense [Alertness]

The character maintains a quick and easy awareness of ambushes and other nasty surprises – perhaps preternaturally, perhaps simply due to finely tuned mundane senses. Whenever ambushed (see page 142), the character is able to take a full defensive action, gaining a +2 on his defense roll, regardless of whether or not he's surprised (if he is surprised, dropping his base defense to Mediocre, this Stunt takes his base defense up to Fair).

✧ Saw It Coming [Alertness]

Requires Danger Sense.

The character is never surprised; he may always take a full defensive action when ambushed, and his base defense is never reduced to Mediocre by surprise.

✧ Constant Vigilance [Alertness]

Requires Saw It Coming.

Not only is the character never surprised, he is never forced onto a defensive footing by an ambush. The ambush rules simply do not apply to him; in the first exchange, where others may normally only defend (if that), he may act freely, in normal initiative order.

✧ Take It All In [Alertness]

Requires two other Alertness Stunts.

The character has tuned his Alertness to the point where, if he takes a normal Investigation length of time to open his senses to a location, he can gather an Investigation level of detail about it, without really going through the motions of a methodical search. When acting in this fashion, he may use Alertness instead of Investigation (which, really, is nearly all of the cases where he might use Investigation).

The trick with the results, here, is that they may come to the character with a different set of details than a methodical approach would yield. Conclusions may precede supporting details; the Story Teller might choose to describe the middle part of a piece of information before the beginning or the end. Such are the hazards of Alertness.

Art

(Skill, page 103)

Appreciation

✧ The Artist's Eye [Art]

The artist is always examining the world for the creative hand at work. Even in endeavors which have nothing to do with art, he can recognize the elements of personality – the "signature", if you will – of those at work.

While this does not reveal identity, it does allow the artist to determine common traits, themes, and behaviors with ease. Whenever making a determination as to the source of something (its "author", after a fashion), characters with this Stunt may use their Art instead of the usual Skill that would be rolled. If the character has encountered several products of the same person, he may see past those things to the person – thus confirming a common source.

Furthermore, the character's keen eye enables him to connect the metaphor of the artist – his work – with the artist himself. When encountering a work of art in any form, the character may roll Art to gain insight into the artist behind the work, as if he were using the Empathy Skill on the actual artist (resisted by the usual Skills). This Stunt may only be used once per piece of art.

Taken as a whole, this Stunt allows the artist to make assessment efforts against his target in absentia.

Creation

✧ Virtuoso [Art]

The character is a master of some specific form of art – painting, composition, singing, conducting or playing music, or the like. The character is a virtuoso in his field and recognized worldwide for his Skill. Even if his actual Skill level is not high, he is still on the list of the finest artists in the world, just not necessarily at the top of it. The character receives a +1 knowledge bonus when performing his art form. He may also pick a specialty (such a specific instrument or a specific school of painting) for which he receives a +1 specialty bonus. When applicable, the virtuoso may produce works of art one time increment faster than would normally take.

✧ Moving Performance [Art]

Requires Virtuoso.

Whenever the artist uses his art to place an Aspect on the scene, the Aspect remains in place in any subsequent scenes involving the audience, up to a day from the end of the performance. At its best, this can essentially move such an Aspect from a scene to the story itself, persisting across many scenes and many audience members.

Persona

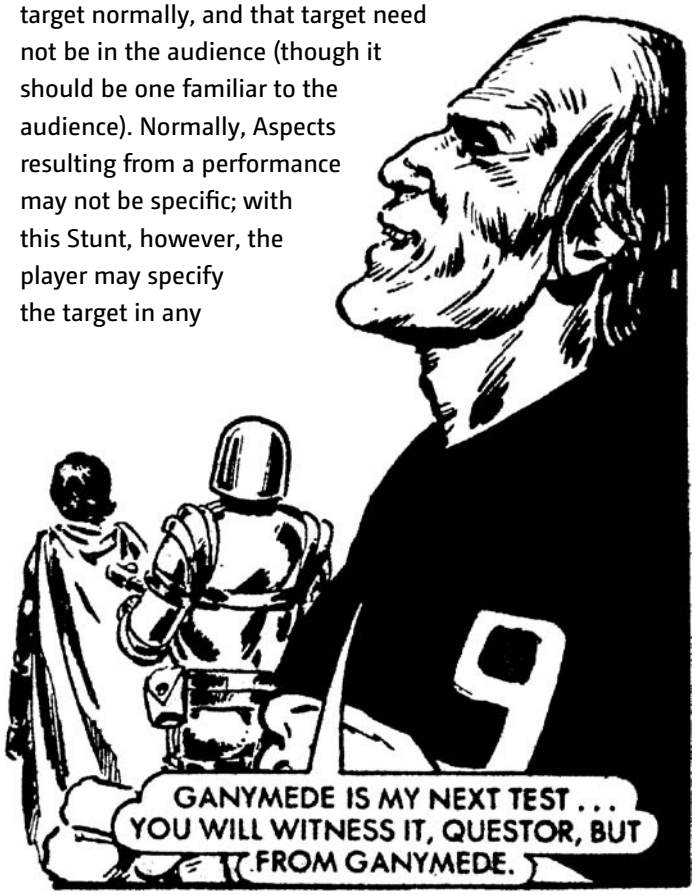
✧ Razor Tongue [Art]

The artist has a way with words, and knows how to craft the most exquisite insults. Whenever making a social roll that uses such words, he may automatically complement the effort with his Art Skill – this is particularly potent when complementing Intimidation to get a rise out of someone, and in such a case, grants an additional +1 regardless of the level of Skill.

✧ Poison Words [Art]

Requires RazorTongue.

The artist's Skill at satire is so profound as to take the whole audience with him. The artist may choose a target normally, and that target need not be in the audience (though it should be one familiar to the audience). Normally, Aspects resulting from a performance may not be specific; with this Stunt, however, the player may specify the target in any



Aspect he puts on the scene. Thus, while an artist might normally be able to add the "Hate" Aspect to a scene, but one with this Stunt may make it "Hate Lord Octavian".

✧ Stage Presence [Art]

Requires Virtuoso.

The artist's works cannot be ignored. The character halves any additional difficulty bonuses due to distractions (rounded down); see page 104 for details.

✧ All the Galaxy's a Stage [Art]

Requires one other Art Stunt.

Normally, acting is somewhat obvious for what it is, meant for a stage and not elsewhere, but with this Stunt, the character's talent is natural and unquestionable, and he may easily, convincingly adopt a persona off-stage. At that point, normally it would stop being a performance and be more about trying to fool someone – crossing over to Deceit. With this Stunt, however, whenever asked to make a Deceit roll to convince a target he is someone he isn't, the artist may choose to roll Art instead.

Reputation

✧ Commissions [Art]

Requires Virtuoso.

Your works and performances are heavily sought out, and there are those who will pay handsomely for it. Once per session, you may use your Art Skill instead of Resources, representing a successful past commission.

✧ Do You Know Who I Am? [Art]

Requires Virtuoso.

Your widespread name and your art are interlinked as one. When identifying yourself in order to get your way in a social or other applicable situation, you may complement Rapport, Intimidation, Deceit and Contacting rolls with your Art Skill.

✧ Weight of Reputation [Art]

Requires Do You Know Who I Am?

Your reputation as an artist is so well known that it occasionally covers up for your social shortcomings.

For a Fate point, you may use your Art Skill instead of Rapport, Intimidation, Contacting, or Deceit, provided those you are dealing with are aware of your reputation (a second Fate point will nearly always assure that they are).

Athletics

(Skill, page 105)

Gymnastics

✧ Contortionist [Athletics]

You can fit into and through spaces and shapes that no normal human readily can. Normally, contorting tasks are impossible to attempt, or at best default to a (non-existent) Contortion Skill rated at Mediocre. With this Stunt, you can use your full Athletics score instead, and have rationale to attempt feats of contortion that are simply unavailable to others.

✧ Acrobat [Athletics]

You are able to perform any number of impressive acrobatic feats. Difficulties assigned for complex manoeuvres while acting (e .g walking on a tightrope, doing brain surgery while hanging from a trapeze) are reduced by two. Falling rolls gain a +2 bonus. When used acrobatically, your Athletics Skill can never be used to restrict another Skill, only complement it.

✧ Safe Fall [Athletics]

Requires Acrobat.

The character can skip effortlessly down sheer surfaces without harm, allowing him to safely fall great distances. When the character falls, but is near a solid surface, such as the wall of a shaft, or has sufficient other things like ropes to offset his fall, all falls are treated as two categories shorter (and may be reduced another step with Athletics as normal).

✧ Slippery [Athletics]

Requires at least one other Athletics Stunt.

You gain a +2 to all attempts to defend against Knockback or push attacks, as well as any attempts to escape from bonds.

Speed

✧ Marathon Training [Athletics]

You know how to conserve your energy when undergoing lengthy athletic activity (long-distance running, multi-day climbs, etc). You may use Athletics instead of Endurance under such circumstances, and in most other cases may complement any Endurance rolls with your Athletics.

✧ Fast as a Leopard [Athletics]

Requires Marathon Training.

You are incredibly fast on your feet. Whenever taking a sprint (but not move) action using Athletics, the value of that action is improved by two. Alternately, you may set aside this bonus in order to be considered on an "even footing" in a race with a mounted beast or slow ground vehicle.

✧ Faster than a Leopard [Athletics]

Requires Fast as a Leopard.

You are simply astonishingly fast. Whenever you roll to sprint, it's at +4; you can reduce this to +2 and be considered on an even footing with a mounted beast or a ground vehicle. Furthermore, you face no penalties for moving one zone as a supplemental action.

Uncommon Movement

✧ Human Spider [Athletics]

The character can climb surfaces he oughtn't be able to. He receives a +2 bonus on any climb, and by **spending a Fate point**, he may eliminate the effects of all difficulty modifiers resulting from the environment or the characteristics of the thing he's climbing (so he can climb a slick, mostly flat surface in a rainstorm at much less difficulty).

✧ Mighty Leap [Athletics]

The character's leaping ability borders on the superhuman. The character may reduce any height related borders (see page 218) by up to three.

✧ Equestrian [Athletics]

The character can use Athletics instead of Survival for all manoeuvres when riding horses or other alien beasts meant for carrying passengers

Burglary

(Skill, page 107)

Perspective

✧ Criminal Mind [Burglary]

You have an acute understanding of what it takes to case out and break in to a place, and can investigate such crimes from the perspective of the criminal instead of the cop. You may use your Burglary Skill instead of Investigation when investigating a theft or other act (such as arson) committed by someone using the Burglary Skill. If the crime closely matches one the character has himself committed before, he gets a +1 bonus for familiarity right off the bat (it's the Story Teller's job to factor this in).

✧ Alarm Sensibilities [Burglary]

You've run into enough traps that you've developed an instinct for avoiding them. You may roll Burglary instead of Alertness or Investigation in order to uncover or otherwise avoid stumbling onto a trap. When your Story Teller calls for an Alertness roll, be sure to make her aware that you have this Stunt – it may change the Skill to roll.

✧ Trespass Tempo [Burglary]

Requires Alarm Sensibilities.

Whenever you're running a breaking and entering operation, you operate on very precise internal clock. You are always aware of exactly how much time has passed, and further, may use Burglary instead of Alertness as your initiative Skill while everything is going to plan.

Technique

✧ Lock Master [Burglary]

The character's skill with improvisation when bypassing a lock or similar contrivance is improved, so long as he has something that could pass as a tool, such as a piece of wire. Characters with this Stunt never suffer an increased difficulty for lacking proper tools on a Burglary roll, and when given proper tools, can defeat locks at one time increment faster than usual.

✧ Mental Blueprint [Burglary]

You're highly skilled at visualizing the whole of a target based on just a part of it. When casing a location, you receive a +2 bonus on your roll.

✧ The Big Heist [Burglary]

Requires Mental Blueprint and at least one other Burglary Stunt.

When the character is Casing (page 107) a location, he normally reveals or declares only one Aspect about the location, in advance. With this Stunt, however, if the character gains spin on his roll, he may reveal or declare one or more additional Aspects (one additional Aspect at 3 shifts, two at 5 shifts, or three at 7 or more shifts).

Further, regardless of spin, if the player is using the declare method with this Stunt, he may save off from making his declarations until he's already in the middle of making the heist – in essence, retroactively introducing elements he'd "already planned for". Only one such retroactive declaration may be made per scene, but in the truly big heists, the job rarely lasts only one scene.

Alternately, the character may trade in one of his "retroactive" Aspect picks in order to declare up to three non-Aspect-based lesser details about the scene. This may be done in addition to making an Aspect pick for the scene.

Contacting

(Skill, page 109)

Companions

✧ Contact [Contacting]

At the time your character takes this Stunt, you must define a specific contact, with a name, a brief sentence about the contact's personality, and her relationship to your character. This contact is a companion as described on page 227, willing and able to accompany you on your adventures, with three advances for you to spend as you wish. For maximum effect, you may wish to allocate one of your Aspects to this contact as well. This Stunt may be taken multiple times, defining a different contact each time.

✧ Close Contacts [Contacting]

Requires at least one Contact.

When you select this Stunt, you may spread three additional advances out amongst your existing contacts, creating unusually talented companions. You may take this Stunt multiple times, but can't ever apply more than six additional advances (for a total of nine) to any one contact.

✧ Network of Contacts [Contacting]

Requires at least one other Contacting Stunt.

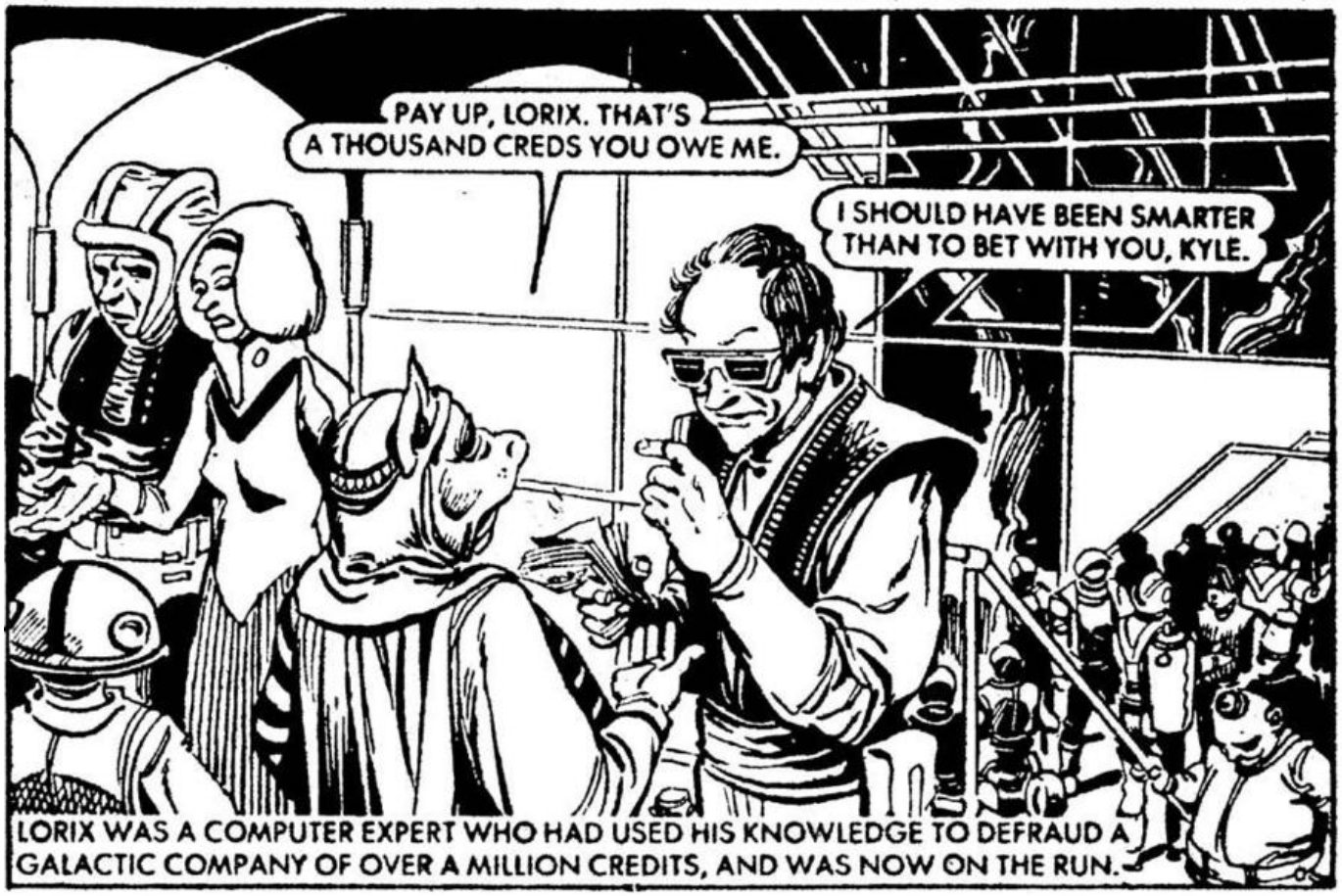
The character can choose from a large number of companions available to him when he needs them. With this Stunt, when the character begins an adventure, his companion doesn't need to be defined. Instead, at the point where he decides he needs the companion, he may reveal her, giving her a name and a few brief cues to the Story Teller to base a personality on.

This companion starts out at Average quality and may have up to two advances.

If the character takes this Stunt more than once, he has two additional advances which he may use to reveal an additional companion, or combine together to create a more capable companion on the fly.

Only one "reveal" of this kind may be done per scene. Once revealed, the companion will be involved and reasonably available at least until the end of the adventure.

If, instead, you choose to have the companion available to you for only one scene before the companion is called away to other things, you may


PAY UP, LORIX. THAT'S A THOUSAND CREDS YOU OWE ME.
I SHOULD HAVE BEEN SMARTER THAN TO BET WITH YOU, KYLE.
LORIX WAS A COMPUTER EXPERT WHO HAD USED HIS KNOWLEDGE TO DEFRAUD A GALACTIC COMPANY OF OVER A MILLION CREDITS, AND WAS NOW ON THE RUN.

build the companion with three advances instead of two. Once the scene ends, the companion is removed from the adventure, one way or another.

Connections

✧ I Know a Guy Who Knows a Guy [Contacting]

Sometimes it's not who you know, but who the people you know, know. Many of your contacts are, themselves, very well connected. The breadth of your contacts make all Contacting rolls take one unit less time, and you gain a +2 on any "second roll" efforts made to corroborate information you've gotten from another of your contacts. Consequently, this bonus is useful on a follow-up, but not on the initial roll.

✧ Insider [Contacting]

The character is able to navigate bureaucracies and organisations easily, not because he understands them, but because he knows people embedded in the organisation who can provide shortcuts. Normally, a character must roll Leadership in order to deal with any sort of bureaucratic entanglement (see page 124). With this Stunt, the character may roll Contacting instead.

✧ Walk the Walk [Contacting]

The character's travels have taken him to every corner of the Universe. His familiarity with the streets and peoples of the worlds allow him to function easily, at home and abroad. The character never suffers any additional difficulty from unfamiliar circumstances when Contacting.

Reputation

✧ Big Man [Contacting]

When selecting this Stunt, the player picks a specific field (Criminal, Business, Politics, Espionage and Another Culture are the most common); this Stunt is often written with that field incorporated, e.g., Big Man in Politics. The character is not merely well connected in that community, he is actually a person of great importance within that area; for maximum

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benefit, this should be paired with an Aspect that indicates similar things.

In addition to the narrative benefits of such a position, the character may use his Contacting Skill in lieu of the Resources Skill for anything which might fall under the auspices of members in that field. This Stunt may be taken multiple times, each time for a different field.

✧ Talk the Talk [Contacting]

Requires Big Man.

Whenever dealing with members of your chosen field, you put out all the right signals, say all the right things. In such circumstances, you may roll your Rapport at +2, or, alternatively, use your Contacting instead of Rapport, in order to get a favorable reaction.

✧ Big Name [Contacting]

Requires Big Man.

You're so well known that an awareness of your name has crossed over into other areas as well. The first time you deal with someone who's heard of you (**spending a Fate point** can assure that they have), and you're using your name, you get a +2 bonus to a Rapport or Intimidation roll.

✧ Big Reputation [Contacting]

Requires Big Name.

Your reputation has reached great proportions, and people are willing to believe all sorts of things about you.

For a Fate point, you may use your Contacting Skill instead of Rapport, Intimidation, Deceit, Leadership, or Resolve, provided those you are dealing with are aware of your reputation (a second Fate point will nearly always assure that they do).

This Stunt combines with the bonus from Big Name, getting the character a +2 to Contacting when using it instead of Rapport or Intimidation.

Deceit

(Skill, page 110)

Confidence

✧ Con Man [Deceit]

You are a bona fide confidence man, and that lets you get a read on people, easy.

You may use your Deceit instead of Empathy to get a "read" on someone (see page 116), but the type of Aspects that may be revealed are limited only to things like character weaknesses, never strengths or

other advantages (unless you win the contest or are otherwise in control of which Aspect is revealed).

Some Aspects will completely miss you; a Good Hearted Person might just fly right over your head.

✧ The Fix Is In [Deceit]

Requires Con Man.

The character is adept at cheating, so much so that he may use his Deceit Skill instead of Gambling whenever he chooses.

When he does so, he is cheating, which means if he fails, he's caught, and the game's loss is treated as if it were a high stakes game, even if it wasn't.

✧ Sucker [Deceit]

Requires Con Man.

You've got this guy completely suckered – or at least, if he's on to you, he's rich enough that he doesn't care. Design a companion (page 227) with two advances. In addition, he is automatically Fair quality, and Skilled with Resources. He tends to buy things for you, along with whatever else it is he does.

The downside is that he's a sucker – you hooked him in, but he is a Poor difficulty target for anyone else looking to sucker him too.

Heck, you may even have some fondness for the guy – you certainly won't leave him hanging out to dry, and that's not just because he pays for everything – but, still, the relationship's not entirely honest.

✧ Big Sucker [Deceit]

Requires Sucker.

You hit it big – this guy's loaded. Your companion's Resources Skill is considered to be two steps higher than his quality; if you've advanced him to a maximum quality of Great, this means he's running around with Fantastic Resources. You may also spend one additional advance on him. He's not just about the money, you know.

Disguise

✧ Clever Disguise [Deceit]

Normally, a character cannot create a disguise that will stand up to intense scrutiny (see page 111). With this Stunt, he may defend against intense scrutiny (anything short of physically trying to remove the disguise) with his full Deceit Skill. Furthermore, he may assemble disguises of this quality in a matter of minutes, provided he has a well-equipped disguise kit on hand.

✧ Mimicry [Deceit]

Requires Clever Disguise.

Deceit can be used to convince people you are someone you aren't – but usually only in a general sense. You can seem to be a cop, an author, et cetera, but you can't seem to be a specific person without a lot of work (and an elevated difficulty). With this Stunt, you can easily imitate the mannerisms and voice of anyone you've had a chance to study – removing another potential cause to have a disguise examined, or perhaps convincing someone who can't see you that you're someone else even though you're undisguised.

Studying someone usually requires only an investment of time and not a roll of the dice – at least half an hour of constant exposure. This timeframe can be reduced, but will require an Empathy, Investigation, or Deceit roll against a target of Mediocre, increased by one for each step faster on the time chart (page 237).

✧ Master of Disguise [Deceit]

Requires Clever Disguise and Mimicry.

The character can convincingly pass himself off as nearly anyone with a little time and preparation. To use this ability, the player **pays a Fate point** and temporarily stops playing. His character is presumed to have donned a disguise and gone "off camera". At any subsequent point during play the player may choose any nameless, filler character (a villain's minion, a bellboy in the hotel, the cop who just pulled you over) in a scene and reveal that that character is actually the Player in disguise!

The character may remain in this state for as long as the player chooses, but if anyone is tipped off that he might be nearby, an investigator **may spend a Fate point** and roll Investigate against the disguised character's Deceit. If the investigator wins, his player (which may be the Story Teller) gets to decide which filler character is actually the disguised Player ("Wait a minute – you're the Emerald Emancipator!").

✧ Infiltrator [Deceit]

Requires Master of Disguise.

While the character is disguised (see Master of Disguise) he may make a single Investigation roll against at target of Mediocre. Each shift gained

can be used to do one of two things: gain a useful (but general) piece of information about the area or group being infiltrated, or leave a clue, hint or message for the rest of the player characters without revealing himself.

✧ Disguise of the Mind [Deceit]

Requires Master of Disguise and a Deceit Skill of Great or better.

You inhabit your disguises so completely that you can actually fully inhabit another persona and unlock hidden Skills and knowledge you don't normally possess. While in a disguise, you may roll your Deceit minus two (so Fair if Great, or Good if Superb) instead of any other Skill the disguised persona might reasonably possess. If you are outright imitating someone specific, sometimes this might give you a higher effective Skill than they actually have – which is fine. You're not a mind-reader, you're simply so good at pretending that you can actually, temporarily unlock a Skill that you believe your persona could have.

Any time you use this Stunt, you must **pay a Fate point**; if you do not wish to pay a Fate point, you may instead roll your Resolve against a difficulty equal to the "false" Skill. If you miss that target, you become lost in the persona for a time, and may be subject to one no-Fate-point compel before you break out of it. The Aspect compelled might not even be one of your own – it may be one possessed by the persona you're mimicking!

Falsehood

✧ The Honest Lie [Deceit]

The best lies are the ones that contain a healthy dose of truth. Whenever the character incorporates a hefty portion of the truth into a lie, he gains a +2 bonus. The truth must be relevant, not unimportant, and significant, not trivial – it must be on par with (or bigger than) the lie, or at least in the ballpark.

✧ Takes One to Know One [Deceit]

As an accomplished liar, you're especially able to figure out when someone else is lying as well. You may use your Deceit Skill instead of your Empathy Skill when trying to figure out if someone is lying. This is not the same thing as getting "a read" on someone, as with the Con Man Stunt, above; instead, it's a quick check: Is this guy lying? Is it a big lie or a small one? Is he mixing in the truth or is it all fabrication?

✧ Clever Facade [Deceit]

Requires either The Honest Lie or Takes One to Know One.

Whenever the character is the target of an Empathy "read", and decides to put a false face forward (see page 111), and wins the contest, he not only provides a false Aspect to the reader, he also gets a read on the reader himself (revealing an Aspect). The reader has fallen for your clever little trap!

Drive

(Skill, page 112)

Vehicles

✧ Custom Ride [Drive]

You love your ride, and have one land vehicle (or ship if the Story Teller agrees) in particular that you take special care of. When driving that vehicle, you receive a +1 bonus (it's assumed to have the craftsmanship improvement – see page 81).

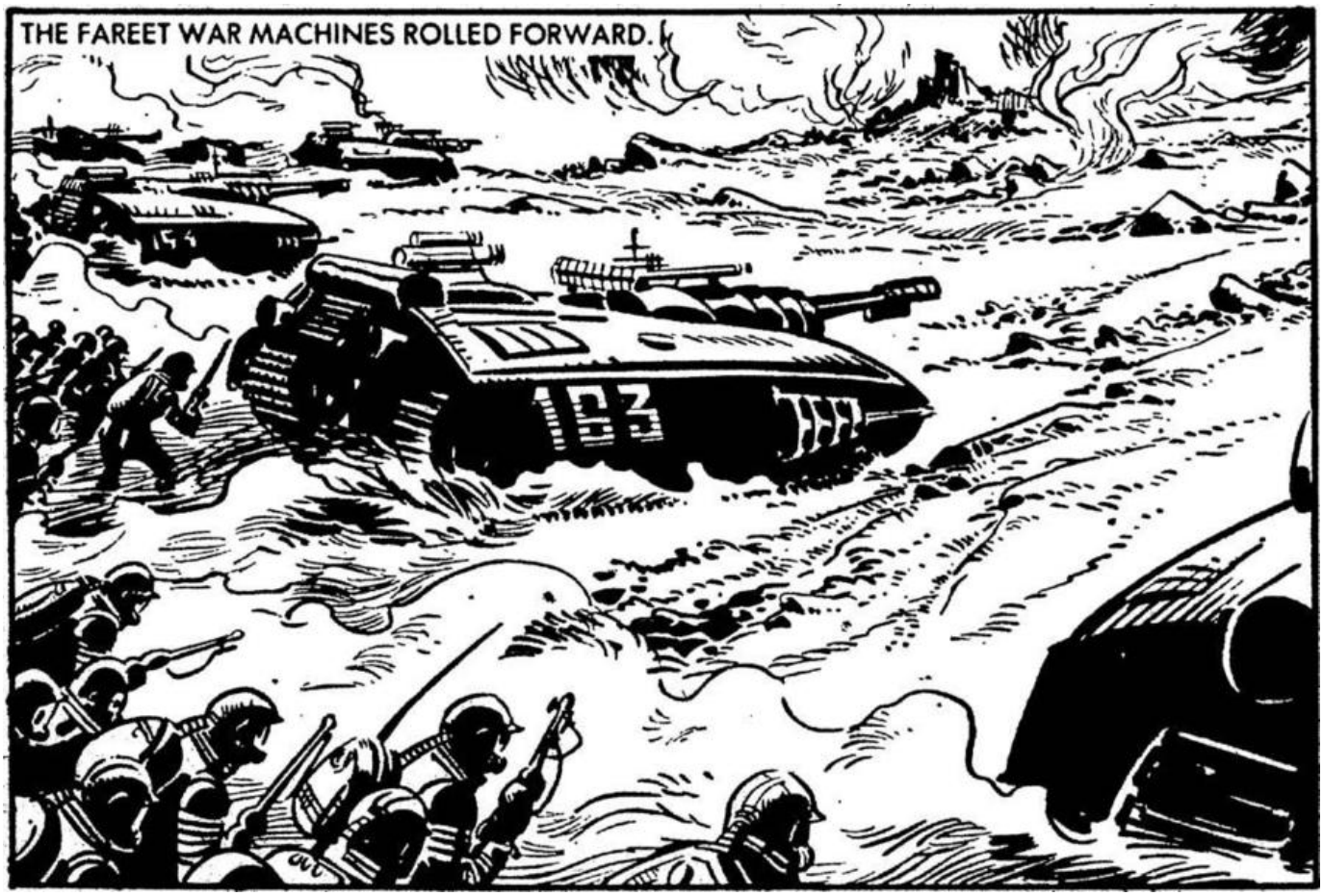
Additionally, you've added (or had added) a little something extra to the vehicle, and you may, once per session**, spend a Fate point** and declare that the vehicle has some extra device (such as an oil slick, speed boost or the like) – for guidelines, see the Universal Gadget Stunt (page 161). You can't go too crazy with the improvements on this on-the-fly gadgetry – many forms of miniaturization and futurization, and several kinds of alternate usage and additional capability, are disallowed at this level of the Stunt. To drive a truly unusual vehicle, you must also take Prototype Vehicle (below).

✧ Prototype Vehicle [Drive]

Requires Custom Ride.

You have a one-of-a-kind vehicle. For starters, your once-a-session gadget, as described above, can have any kind of improvement – the restrictions described in Custom Ride do not apply.

Secondly, your vehicle has three additional built-in improvements you may select. These improvements must be defined in advance of a session (only at the beginning or end), but you needn't pick all of them



at the time you take this Stunt. Once they're picked, they're set, until an engineer can get a chance to work at changing them.

Your vehicle is instantly recognizable as something unusual, unless you spend one of your improvements on making sure that it looks just like any other vehicle of its base type. Regardless, once people learn of its nature, there's almost certain to be attempts to steal it or otherwise learn its secrets. You'd be well advised to take an Aspect tied to your vehicle, so you can get Fate points when this happens!

✧ Vehicle Mechanic [Drive]

Requires at least two other Drive Stunts.

Your character may not understand the broader Aspects of engineering devices and such, but when it comes to vehicles, he knows them inside and out. Whenever working on a vehicle, you may use your Drive Skill instead of Engineering. Due to common principles, you may also use your Drive Skill to work on other vehicles, at a -1.

Tricks

✧ Defensive Driving [Drive]

You're good at keeping your vehicle in one piece. Whenever attempting a driving manoeuvre in a chase (see page 112), you may treat the difficulty as if it were one lower. The difficulty of the manoeuvre itself is not affected, however, for any vehicles that might be chasing you.

✧ One Hand on the Wheel [Drive]

Driving while doing some other action normally results in a -1 penalty. With this Stunt, you don't suffer that penalty, regardless of whether you are rolling Drive (driving is your primary action, and the supplemental action is something minor), or rolling some other Skill (you're taking some other primary action, but keeping the vehicle on the road isn't all that challenging, allowing driving to be the supplemental action). Your Drive Skill can never be used to restrict another Skill, only complement it.

✧ Turn on a Dime [Drive]

Requires Defensive Driving.

Somehow, no matter how crazy you drive, you always seem to pull it off. You're always able to make very tight turns and drive through very narrow spaces without suffering any sort of increased difficulty due to environment, unless it is in fact physically impossible for your vehicle to fit. In many ways this functions like the Defensive Driving Stunt, but instead of lowering many difficulties by one, it potentially lowers these specific difficulties by two.

✧ Unsafe at Any Speed [Drive]

Requires at least one other Drive Stunt.

The character is the bane of curbside markets and rickety struts holding up awnings. The value of any damage this character does to the environment (but not characters or their vehicles) when driving a vehicle is doubled. Any time an object is taken out by the damage, the result should be spectacular – an explosion or collapse. This is not guaranteed to always fall in the character's favor (though it often can, and should)!

Empathy

(Skill, page 116)

Intuition

✧ Ebb and Flow [Empathy]

The character is so aware of the social currents in a situation that he is able to see something of what's coming before it arrives. At the beginning of any social exchange, before proceeding with the usual initiative order, the character may **spend a Fate point** and attempt a quick read – looking for surface moods and other social cues – on any one target of his choosing, as a free action. He may then act normally on his turn as usual.

✧ Preemptive Grace [Empathy]

Requires Ebb and Flow.

You are so tuned into social situations that you may act quickly and decisively to shape the situation to your liking. Empathy is used to determine initiative in a social conflict, the same way Alertness is used in a physical one. With this Stunt, your Empathy is considered two higher for the purposes of initiative. If you're tied for initiative with someone who does not have this Stunt, this Stunt breaks ties.

✧ Track the Soul [Empathy]

Your understanding of people you've met is sufficiently strong that it gives you an easy sense of how to find them. In any situation where you're tracking down or otherwise trying to find someone you've met before, you may roll Empathy instead of Investigation.

✧ The Skeptic's Ear [Empathy]

Requires at least one other Empathy Stunt.

The world is full of lies and liars, and your character is always on the lookout for them. The character always knows when someone is using the Deceit Skill on him, and may take full defensive actions (getting a +2) with his Empathy if appropriate.

Normally, the use of deception is not so easy to spot in advance, and thus justifying full defensive actions is difficult. Successfully determining that something is trying to deceive you is not the same as revealing the truth, however, no matter how well you do.

Insight

✧ Cold Read [Empathy]

Normally, to use empathy to get a read on someone it requires at least a few minutes of conversation, if not more (see page 116). Characters with this Stunt may do so after much less time – two or three steps faster on the time table (see page 237).

✧ Heart's Secret [Empathy]

You have an instinct for going right to the heart of a person and finding out what matters most to them. Whenever you make a successful Empathy read on someone (see page 116), the Story Teller must select from the Aspects that are of the utmost importance to the character, unless you explicitly instruct her otherwise. Normally, the Story Teller has a freer rein in her selection.

While this still can't get you to trip over anything that's truly still a secret to you (this isn't an instant mystery solving Stunt!), it should at least put you as close to the core truth about a character.

✧ Hit Them Where It Hurts [Empathy]

Your Skill at reading people makes you adept at provoking a strong emotional response if you're trying to get them angry, depressed, or something

similar. Normally, the Intimidation Skill would be used for such efforts; however, if you've succeeded at any Empathy roll against the target previously, you may use Empathy to wage such psychological warfare instead. In the hands of a character with high Empathy, this is especially lethal when combined with a successful read on someone that reveals an Aspect.

✧ A Peek Inside [Empathy]

Requires at least two other Empathy Stunts.
Once you get an insight into someone, you may try to look much deeper than one normally can. Trying to learn something specific and concrete about another person can be a lot like trying to catch a specific raindrop – you can be sure you got wet, but figuring out if you actually got the one you were going after is another matter. In the best case scenario, you've revealed one of the target's Aspects.

With this Stunt, however, you achieve such a strong understanding of your subject that you can start to make some fairly accurate guesses about his behavior.

After you have successfully gotten a "read" as described in the Empathy write-up (page 116), you may immediately ask the Story Teller a hypothetical question about the target's motives, which the Story Teller must be able to answer with yes, no, or maybe, to the best of her ability. The question must speak to the kind of person the target is, not things they've done, though it may ask if they are capable of doing such things. If the Story Teller answers with a maybe, you may ask a second question to get clarification. This second question may seek details, rather than another one-word answer.

✧ Uncanny Hunch [Empathy]

See Investigation stunt, Uncanny Hunch, page 170.

Endurance

(Skill, page 116)

Persistence

✧ Last Leg [Endurance]

The character may **spend Fate points** to keep standing. Any time the character would be taken out by (or otherwise suffer a consequence from) a physical hit he may **spend a Fate point** to remain standing or otherwise defer a consequence or concession for one more exchange, or until he's hit again, whatever comes first. Once the extra time he's bought is up, all effects he has deferred come to bear at once. He may keep spending Fate points in this fashion until he runs out, each time the time limit expires.

This means that with a whole handful of Fate points he might go on for three exchanges with no consequences or collapse impeding him, and then suddenly keel over, revealing Multiple Bruises and a

Broken Rib and a few surplus consequences – which would suggest an immediate taken out result to be determined by his attacker, even if that attacker has been defeated in the intervening time!

✧ Feel the Burn [Endurance]

The character can push through incredible pain in order to reach his goal. The character can take one extra major, physical consequence (see page 220) before moving on to a severe physical consequence, allowing him to take a total of four consequences in a physical conflict.

✧ Face the Pain [Endurance]

Requires Feel the Burn.

The character is able to lessen the effects of physical injury thanks to his incredible stamina. Once per scene, he character may **spend a Fate point**, and remove any single check mark from the physical stress track.

✧ Tireless [Endurance]

Normally, someone who has not gotten a regular night's sleep takes a consequence indicating his lack of rest, which cannot be removed save with the requisite amount of sleep. Not so for the character with this Stunt.

Whenever this character would need to sleep, he may roll Endurance (see below for the difficulties) and spend shifts to reduce the amount of time he needs for a regular night's rest. Each shift spent reduces the time increment (to get a full night's rest) by one. One shift gets from 6-8 hours down to 3-4; two gets it down to an hour; three gets it to half an hour; four gets it to a few minutes.

The character may continue sleeping past that point, but if awoken suddenly, he does not face any issues due to insufficient sleep – he is refreshed and alert. Normally the difficulty for the Endurance roll is simply Mediocre, but if the character chooses to skip a night of sleep, the difficulty of the roll is increased by one step each night. Once he fails the roll, he must get a full, normal (6-8 hours) night of sleep to "reset" the clock; if he succeeds on subsequent nights, and chooses to sleep, he can still sleep for the truncated amount of time.

Recovery

✧ Bounce Back [Endurance]

The character heals faster than the norm, which has the effect of reducing the severity of consequences resulting from physical injury. On some characters this means no matter how bad of a beating they seem to have taken, they shrug it off. When considering the amount of time it takes to recover from a consequence of a particular severity, reduce the timeframe by two steps on the time chart (page 237). This means that minor physical consequences will be removed between scenes even if there's no "break" between them, major consequences will take about an hour of rest instead of six, and severe consequences may be reduced from months to weeks, weeks to days, or days to the length of an afternoon!

✧ Death Defiance [Endurance]

If the character is ever taken out away from the view of other characters and death appears imminent, certain, or absolute, (such as from dropping off a cliff, apparently failing to escape from an exploding building and so on) then coincidence will conspire to keep the character alive. This Stunt does not protect the character from dying "on camera".

The player then **spends half of his remaining Fate points**, rounded up (he must have at least one to do this), and may watch play and think of a good explanation for how he survived.

Once he has a story, he may re-enter play in any subsequent scene in as dramatic a fashion as he sees fit, with all of his physical stress cleared and a single major consequence to reflect the dangers survived.

✧ Developed Immunities [Endurance]

Requires at least one other Endurance Stunt.

Whether through natural aptitude or careful exposure and development, the character is quite simply immune to most common poisons, and terribly resistant to uncommon ones.

He may resist any uncommon poison he has not previously encountered at a +2 to his Endurance roll. If he has previously encountered the poison, even in trace amounts, this bonus increases to a +6.

Toughness

✧ One Hit to the Body [Endurance]

The character can pay a Fate point and ignore the effects of one attack per game session.

✧ Thick Skinned [Endurance]

Requires One Hit To The Body.

This character just doesn't feel pain and can take more punishment than a lesser man. A character with this Stunt gets one additional stress box beyond those normally granted by his Endurance score – meaning a character with Superb Endurance can have a top physical stress capacity of nine.

✧ Made of Steel [Endurance]

Requires Thick Skinned.

The character ignores the first point of physical stress damage taken each exchange.

✧ Now You've Made Me Mad [Endurance]

Requires two other Endurance Stunts.

Once per scene, the character may turn a wound he has taken into pure motivation. After the character takes physical stress, **spend a Fate point** and the character gets to add the value of the wound (the total stress damage from that attack) to an action in the next exchange taken against the person who inflicted the stress.

Engineering

(Skill, page 118)

Devices

✧ Personal Gadget [Engineering]

You have a personal gadget based on an existing (or potentially existing) piece of technology, with three improvements. You must define at least the basic nature of the gadget, and one or two of the improvements, at the time you take this Stunt. You may take this Stunt several times, either for several personal gadgets, or to provide additional improvements to the same gadget. See page 80 for detailed gadget design rules.

✧ Universal Gadget [Engineering]

A universal gadget is, essentially, a personal gadget that you may design on the fly, in the middle of a situation, as if your character happened to have "just the thing" in his satchel at the precise moment when it was needed. This gadget follows the same design rules as a personal gadget (above), but is only allowed two improvements, not three. Once defined, the gadget is locked in for the remainder of the session. As with personal gadgets, see page 80 for detailed gadget design rules.

The trade-off is that you can define the gadget on the fly and in the moment, as something your character already happened to have on hand (or just whipped up in a matter of seconds). As with personal gadget, you may take this Stunt multiple times.

✧ Computer Engineer [Engineering]

With this Stunt the character can program and hack computer systems, using their Engineering Skill instead of Science. They also know how to pull the system apart to repair and maintain it (using the same rules for repair under Engineering on page 119)

Methods

✧ Demolitions [Engineering]

The character is an expert with explosives. Any time he can take the time to properly set up charges, the

resulting explosion's force rating is increased by three, by placing the bombs at the exact weak points of the targeted structure.

This benefit does not apply without preparation, a target structure, and a chance to study the target. Thus, it doesn't apply in situations such as setting charges hastily or lobbing explosive devices at zombies.

✧ Architect of Death [Engineering]

Requires one other Engineering Stunt.

You have an innate knack for crafting weaponry. Whenever dealing with an Engineering roll involving a weapon – repairing, designing, upgrading, etcetera – your difficulties are reduced by one, and additionally, the time to get the work done is reduced by one step on the time table (see page 237).

✧ Grease Monkey [Engineering]

Requires one other Engineering Stunt.

If it has an engine and flies in the air or space, you "get" it, intuitively and completely. Whenever dealing with a Engineering roll involving a air or space vehicle – repairing, designing, upgrading, etcetera – your difficulties are reduced by one, and additionally, the time to get the work done is reduced by one step on the time table (see page 237).

✧ Mister Fix-It [Engineering]

The character's talented at getting things repaired under time-critical circumstances. The time it takes to get something fixed by the character is reduced by two steps. If the situation is already operating on the fastest possible amount of time the difficulty of the repair effort is reduced by one. These bonuses stack with Grease Monkey (above)!

✧ Thump of Restoration [Engineering]

Requires Mister Fix-It.

Sometimes a bunch of repairs can get short-handed with a good swift thump. A character must **spend a Fate point** to activate this ability, and roll Engineering. He then hits a device or other contraption that isn't working, and it starts working immediately, regardless of the difficulty rating to repair it under time pressure. It will continue work for a number of exchanges equal to the shifts gained on the Engineering roll (vs.

a target of Mediocre). Once the time is up, the device stops working again, and any efforts to repair it are at a one step higher difficulty (since, after all, you hit the thing). If the character wishes to thump again, he may do so for another Fate point, but the difficulty for the Engineering roll increases by one on each subsequent attempt.

Fists

(Skill, page 120)

Brawling

✧ Brawler [Fists]

You're at home in any big old burly brawl, with multiple opponents and ideally some beer in you.

Whenever you are personally outnumbered in a fight (i.e., when someone gets to attack you at a bonus due to a numerical advantage) your defense rolls with Fists are at +1. When fighting two or more minions, you deal one additional stress on a successful hit.

✧ Dirty Fighter [Fists]

Requires Brawler.

Your character has a talent for fighting dirty and is experienced in pulling all manner of tricks in order to get the upper hand on his opponents. By exploiting an opponent's weakness, you are able to strike deep and true. Any time you tag an opponent's Aspect in a fight, or tag an Aspect of the scene that affects your foe, you get an additional +1 on the roll.

✧ Crippling Blow [Fists]

Requires Dirty Fighter.

When you injure an opponent with your Fists, you may **spend a Fate point** to force the target to take a consequence rather than check off a box. This can only be done once per opponent in a given fight scene. The target may choose not to take the consequence if he is willing to concede.

✧ Signature Strike [Fists]

Requires Crippling Blow (above) or Fist of Death (below).

Your character has a specific attack which he has honed to devastating perfection. It may be a formalized punch with an appropriately dramatic name (Thousand Whirlwinds Strike As One!) or may be as informal as complete mastery of the kick in the crotch.

Once per opponent per fight, the character may use this strike. To do so, the player must clearly describe whatever posturing or preamble the strike requires, declare he's using the strike, and roll the dice.

If the strike successfully damages the opponent (inflicts stress or a consequence by itself), it imposes a consequence in addition to treating the attack normally (such as checking off a box due to stress inflicted). This means that if the stress would normally produce a consequence, the victim will end up taking two consequences.

✧ Mix it Up [Fists]

Requires Brawler.

Overwhelming odds are your bread and butter. You are used to dodging and twisting, keeping multiple opponents in each other's way. You actually get better the more people pile onto you. You may save up your spin whenever you gain it on a defense, and apply it to your next attack, no matter how many other actions happen in between. Multiple successful, spin-generating defenses may allow you to save up multiple points of spin, for a single large bonus on your next attack.

✧ Army of One [Fists]

Requires Mix it Up.

You are a one-man army; the odds don't matter to you. Whenever you are attacked, opponents simply do not get a bonus to their attacks due to an advantage of numbers.

✧ Whatever's on Hand [Fists]

Requires Brawler.

The character is Skilled in the use of improvised weapons, and may use Fists instead of the Weapons Skill when using an improvised weapon. Improvised weapons tend to break, and thus don't usually last for more than one exchange, so players are encouraged to choose weapons which smash dramatically.

✧ Fists of Fury [Fists]

Requires Brawler.

Swinging wildly and with force, the character strikes at an opponent over and over again, wearing down his defense with each blow. Against such an onslaught, there is simply no good defense. Opponents who attempt to use an all-out defense against your Fists attacks do not get a +2 bonus.

Kung Fu

✧ Martial Arts [Fists]

Your training in the martial practices of the ancients have honed your abilities with your Fists into a finely disciplined form that is part combat Skill, part art form. This gives you an acute insight into the means and methods of barehanded warfare.

You may use your Fists Skill to study an opponent by engaging him and testing his defenses with your own martial techniques. You must do this as a full action during an exchange. Your target must defend against this action, which is essentially a manoeuvre, with his Fists Skill.

If you succeed, you have gained insight to your target's fighting techniques, and may place an Aspect on the target, as with a successful manoeuvre. Whenever you tag this Aspect, you gain an additional +1 to your roll, for a total of +3 instead of the normal tagging bonus of +2.

✧ Brickbreaker [Fists]

Requires Martial Arts.

You are able to focus the force of your blows into a concentrated, small area that is devastating to solid materials. Any stress you deal to a non-character target with Fists is doubled, once per exchange.

✧ Demoralizing Stance [Fists]

Requires Martial Arts.

As a trained fighter, you are able to adopt a stance that makes it unequivocally clear how capable you are of handing someone his ass. Whenever displaying your fighting stance or techniques, you may roll Fists instead of Intimidation.

✧ Flying Kick [Fists]

Requires Martial Arts.

You are able to leap through the air, leading with a powerful kick that can lay an unsuspecting opponent out. You may move one zone and launch a Fists attack without taking a penalty for moving, or you may move two zones and make an attack at -1. All other actions, including those with Fists, that are not a Fists attack described as a flying kick, require a roll at -1 if you move a single zone on your action, as normal.

✧ Flow like Water [Fists]

Requires Martial Arts.

Whenever you mount a full defense, you gain an additional +1 to your Fists rolls, for a potent total defense bonus of +3.

✧ Bend like the Reed [Fists]

Requires Flow Like Water.

You have a flexible martial arts style that allows you to turn an opponent's force against himself. Whenever you gain spin on a defense, you may immediately take a free action against the attacker to make a throw manoeuvre (see page 225).

✧ Lethal Weapon [Fists]

Requires Martial Arts.

Your martial Skill is dedicated to dishing out punishment, and your hands are practically illegal in most civilized countries. Any time your opponent opts to take a mild or moderate consequence from a blow you have dealt, you may **spend a Fate point** to increase the severity of that consequence by one step, increasing mild to moderate and moderate to severe. The opponent may then reconsider whether to take the consequence, or instead offer a concession. You may not do this to an opponent who is already taking a severe consequence.

✧ Fist of Death [Fists]

Requires Lethal Weapon.

By concentrating your force into a powerful blow, you may devastate even the most potent of opponents. Once per opponent per fight, you may **spend a Fate point** after landing a successful blow to fill your opponent's highest unchecked stress box, regardless of how much stress you would normally inflict.

✧ Signature Strike [Fists]

As with the Stunt of the same name, above (page 163).

Gambling

(Skill, page 120)

Luck

✧ Gambling Man [Gambling]

Requires one or more compellable Aspects related to gambling.

As a gambling man, the character is rarely able to turn down a bet or an opportunity to take a risk. Compels involving your gambling Aspects automatically start out at a point of escalation – you must either **spend two Fate points** to avoid them, or gain two Fate points if you accept them, right at the outset.

✧ Double or Nothing [Gambling]

Requires Gambling Man.

When it comes to head to head conflict, the character's Skill at gambling and taking risks is paramount.

Once per scene, after the gambler has lost a Gambling roll, he has the option to declare "Double or Nothing!" This is a call for both sides to reroll (and as such doesn't involve Fate points). If the gambler wins the next roll, the initial exchange is treated as a scratch (no loss to any participants), but if he loses (by whatever amount) he takes a hit equal to double the value of the initial loss. Regardless, such a move often elevates the stakes of a game. This can turn a regular stakes game into a high stakes one, and a high stakes game into a matter of life and death.

✧ The Devil's Own Luck [Gambling]

Requires Gambling Man and at least one other Gambling Stunt.

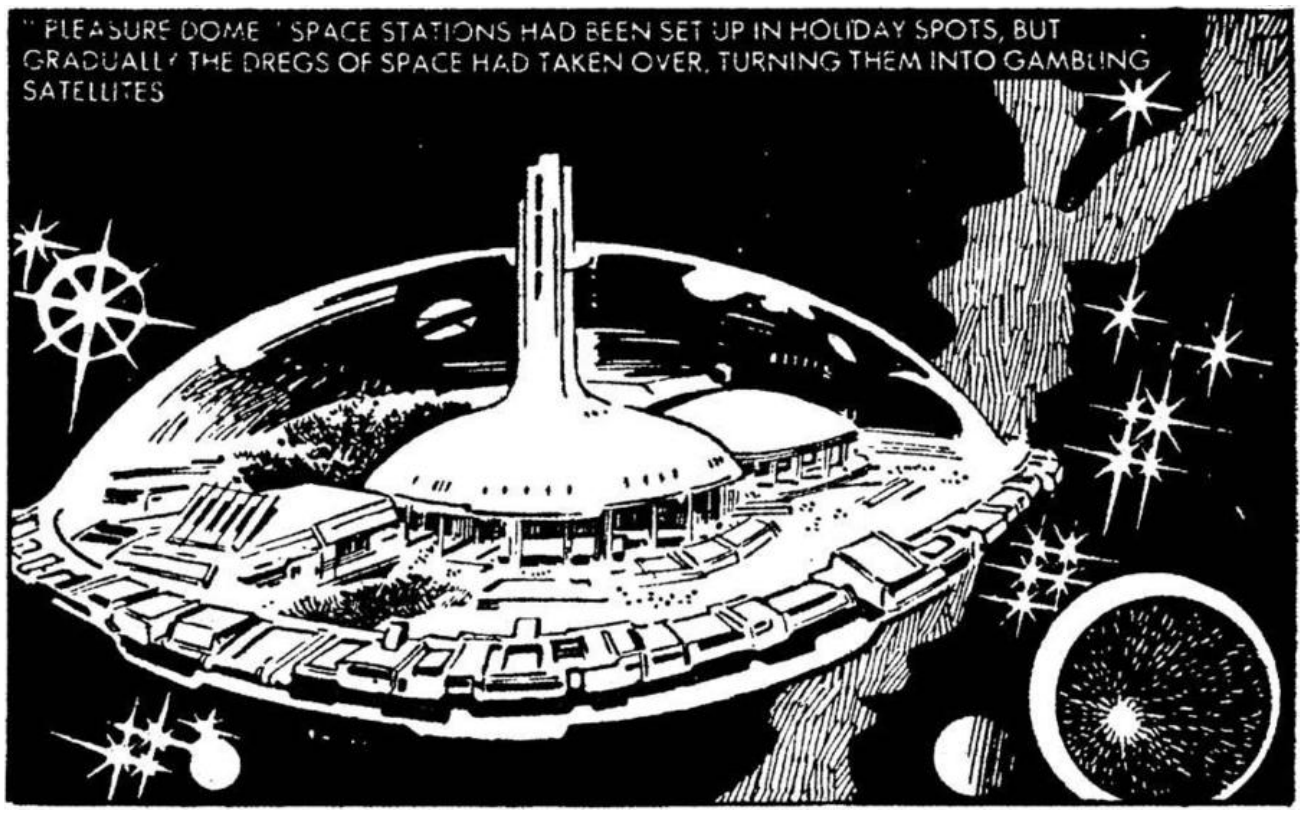
On games of pure chance, like roulette, where a character could not normally roll a Skill to affect the outcome, the character may use his Gambling Skill at its full value (otherwise he'd be rolling Mediocre or worse instead).

Skill

✧ Know When to Fold 'Em [Gambling]

Whenever gambling with Extra's, the player may ask that the Story Teller roll the Extra's Gambling in advance. Whenever the Story Teller does this, the roll is automatically considered to be secret – she doesn't have to show it to anyone.

The twist is that the Story Teller must indicate to the player whether the Extra's roll is above or below the player's character's Gambling Skill – just not by how much. Given this knowledge, the player may then


" PLEASURE DOME " SPACE STATIONS HAD BEEN SET UP IN HOLIDAY SPOTS, BUT GRADUALLY THE DREGS OF SPACE HAD TAKEN OVER, TURNING THEM INTO GAMBLING SATELLITES

choose whether his character participates, or excuses himself, from the Gambling contest. If the player's character does participate, the Story Teller reveals the value of the roll, and may still spend Fate points on behalf of her Extra as usual once the contest starts in earnest.

✧ Never Bluff a Bluffer [Gambling]

The character's experience with Gambling gives him an occasional insight into other parts of life. Whenever dealing with a bluff of some kind, he may use Gambling instead of Deceit (to run a bluff) or instead of Empathy (to see through one). The player should remind the Story Teller that he has this Stunt whenever he's the target of something that might be a bluff, so that the Story Teller knows to call for the correct Skill to be rolled.

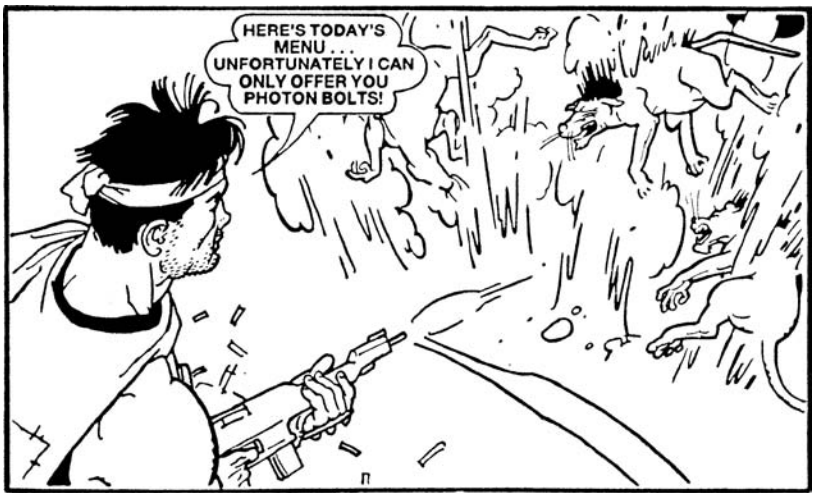
✧ Winnings [Gambling]

The character wins more than he loses, and is often flush with cash. Once per session, he may use Gambling instead of Resources to represent these winnings, so long as he hasn't recently experienced a loss. The player must provide a quick one-sentence explanation of what the resource is and how he won it, when using this Stunt.

✧ Players' Club [Gambling]

Requires at least one other Gambling Stunt.

You've played in so many games, and in so many places, that it's rare that you can't find someone who knows you. You may use your Gambling Skill instead of Contacting whenever making a Contacting roll – though doing so invariably colors the results with the nature of Gambling.



✧ Gambling Buddy [Gambling]

Requires Players' Club.

Once per session, you may introduce a companion character into a scene, on the fly, as suits the convenience of the moment. This companion character has the Skilled (Gambling) advance for free, and two other advances which you may define at the moment of the reveal, or after the fact as you travel around with your buddy.

Guns

(Skill, page 121)

Aiming

✧ Long Shot [Guns]

For whatever reason, you're always able to take shots at a greater distance than you should be. You can use pistols up to three zones away (instead of two); furthermore, rifles and other such weaponry reach an additional zone (or two, if the Story Teller feels generous).

✧ Shot on the Run [Guns]

The character is light on his feet with a gun in his hand, able to keep the gunplay going while evading attempts to harm him.

This character may use Guns as a defense Skill against physical attacks; normally, Guns cannot be used defensively.

✧ Stay on Target [Guns]

Taking slow and careful aim can be done as a manoeuvre, placing an Aspect on your target (such as "In My Sights").

Whenever performing an aiming manoeuvre against a target, you may roll your Guns at +1 to place the Aspect, +2 if you've brought along a targeting scope or similar aiming device (in addition to whatever bonuses the scope itself provides).

✧ Trick Shot [Guns]

Your character gains +2 on the roll for any Guns action that involves shooting an inanimate object. While this cannot be used to actually attack another character, it can be very useful for indirect effects, like shooting down a chandelier.

✧ Zero G Firefights

You are trained in using both energy and projectile guns in zero gravity situations. Trying to use a gun in zero G without this training results in a -1 to the Gun Skill. You also have a +1 to manoeuvre rolls in defence while in zero G.

Ammunition

✧ Fast Reload [Guns]

Normally, reloading your guns is considered a part of the normal ebb and flow of combat and doesn't become an issue until something happens to make it relevant. A lack of ammunition can show up one of two ways. First, "out of ammunition" can often show up as a minor consequence for someone with a gun. With this Stunt, the character may **spend a Fate point** in order to remove this consequence immediately, at the end of any exchange.

The character is still considered to have taken a minor consequence for purposes of determining whether his next consequence is moderate – the minor consequence simply won't be there.

Second, "out of ammunition" can show up as a temporary Aspect resulting from a manoeuvre (to try to get someone to use up his shots). Whenever this character is the target of such a manoeuvre, he may defend at +2.

✧ One Shot Left [Guns]

That last bullet has a kind of magic to it. A character with this Stunt may declare that he is on his last shot, and may make any single Guns attack at +3. This is the character's last shot – its use means that there's no more ammo, no holdout guns or the like. The only way the character is going to be able to use his Guns Skill in the scene is if he takes an action acquiring a new weapon or ammunition, which may not always be possible. Even the Fast Reload Stunt cannot be used to remedy this situation; you really are out of ammunition.

✧ Rain of Photons [Guns]

Your character is Skilled at laying down a scathing hail of suppressive fire. When using Guns to perform a block (see page 217), the character can ignore up to two points of penalties imposed by the Story Teller due to the complexity of the block.

Draw

✧ Quick Draw [Guns]

This allows a character to bring his gun or guns to his hand so fast it's as if by magic. The character takes no penalty for drawing a gun as a supplemental action; if someone is actively blocking such an action (see page 217), you may treat that block as if it had a value two steps lower.

✧ Lightning Hands [Guns]

Requires Quick Draw.

The character and his gun are as one; the thought to take aim and fire is the same as the action. With this Stunt, the character may use his Guns Skill to determine initiative, instead of Alertness.

✧ Snap Shot [Guns]

Requires Lightning Hands.

Once per exchange, between or before other characters' actions, the character may **spend a Fate point** to preempt the usual turn order and act next.

The action taken must involve a roll with his Guns Skill – usually an attack. This may be done in addition to the character's normal action, but each time it's done in the same scene, the Fate point cost increases by one.

Firepower

✧ Gun-Crazy [Guns]

The character's so thoroughly into the gunsmithing that he's developed a focused talent for working on the things. Whenever working with guns specifically, this character may use Guns instead of Engineering.

✧ Custom Firearm [Guns]

Requires Gun-Crazy.

You have one special gun that you hold above all others. This is a gadget, which automatically has the craftsmanship improvement (see page 81), as well as two other improvements which you may change between sessions. In addition, the gun is so well-made that it never needs repairs of great length if it's damaged; reduce the time it takes you to repair it by four steps.

✧ Two Gun Joe [Guns]

Normally, shooting with two guns just looks cool without providing a bonus. With this Stunt, a character firing two weapons has a decisive advantage.

Any time this character uses two guns and hits a target for at least one stress (not including the weapon's damage bonus), the stress of the hit is increased by one (meaning, essentially, that he never hits a target for less than two stress, when he hits).

Furthermore, any defense against manoeuvres to deprive the character of either of his guns is improved by one. The two belong together, after all, in the hands of a Two Gun Joe.

Intimidation

(Skill, page 122)

Control

✧ Infuriate [Intimidation]

Intimidation gives you a real talent for scaring people, but sometimes fear isn't an option. That doesn't mean you can't still get up someone's nose, so long as you're willing to sacrifice a bit of the control that fear gets you.

Whenever deliberately trying to get someone angry with you, you receive a +2 bonus. If this results in an attack or other action against you by your target, you may use Intimidation to complement the Skill you use on the first exchange, no matter the circumstance – after all, you made it happen, so you were ready for it.

✧ Subtle Menace [Intimidation]

The character exudes menace far in excess of his capability to act. Even bound and behind prison bars, the character is so ripe with the promise of the awful things he could do that he's still scary. This character may use Intimidation no matter what the power imbalance in the situation is, and reduces his target's bonuses for acting from a superior position by 2 (to a minimum of +0).

✧ The Serpent's Tongue [Intimidation]

Requires Subtle Menace.

It's hard not to talk to this character. Not because he's approachable, but because it seems like such a bad idea not to. Fear makes people uncomfortable, and they occasionally let things slip they would not otherwise.

The upshot is that the character may use Intimidation in lieu of Empathy or Rapport when trying to get information out of someone in a "softer" fashion. If successfully used in this way, the target is definitely rattled – so it certainly doesn't leave the target in the same pleasant state he might be left by one of those other Skills. If used to get a "read" on a character, the Aspects revealed are limited only to those which might be expressed in the language of fear.

✧ Unapproachable [Intimidation]

It's difficult to try to manipulate someone when you're constantly reminded of how scary they are. A character with this Stunt may use his Intimidation in lieu of their Resolve to defend against Rapport, Deceit, and Empathy.

Fear

✧ Scary [Intimidation]

This character is just someone you don't want to cross, and that's clear even to other intimidating folks. Normally, Intimidation attempts are resisted by Resolve; with this Stunt, the character can use his Intimidation Skill to resist Intimidation attempts.

✧ Aura of Menace [Intimidation]

Requires Scary.

Characters with an Aura of Menace are the terror of all those who oppose them. Others are often powerless to describe what exactly it is about the character that is unsettling, but regardless, it has the effect of rooting them to the spot and believing the threats the guy makes.

Once per scene per target, the character may **spend a Fate point** to intimidate a target as a free action, no matter what the circumstances, immediately (if between actions), or immediately after the current action underway.

This free action takes place in addition to any other action the character might take during the exchange.

✧ Aura of Fear [Intimidation]

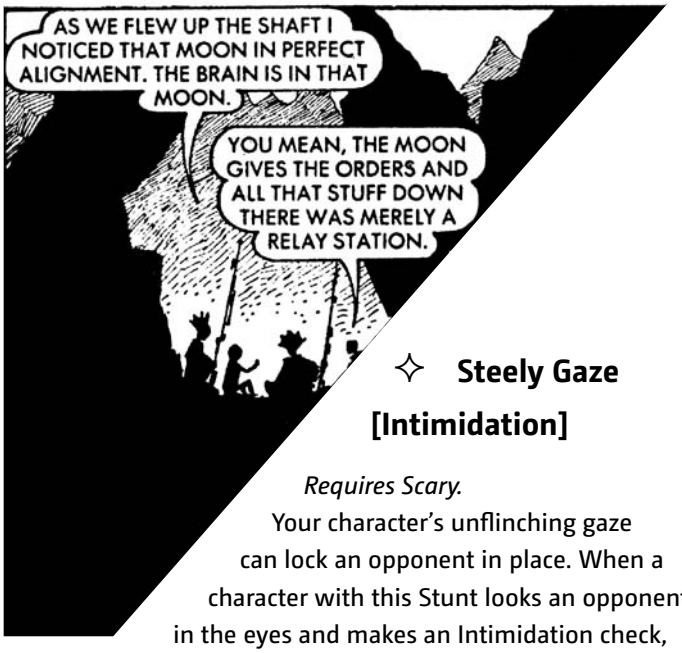
Requires Aura of Menace.

The character's intimidating appearance and attitude is potent, making him able to intimidate entire crowds. As a full action, and only once per scene, the character may **spend a Fate point** and make an intimidation attempt against all opponents in the scene. The effort is made at a -2 to the roll, but the character only rolls once, essentially setting the defensive difficulty that everyone must beat. If the effort at least beats the quality level of the minions present in the scene, at least half their number are automatically affected by the Intimidation effort regardless of their roll. This effect on minions may be cancelled if they have a leader with Leadership present, who may take a second defensive action on their behalf, using that Skill.

✧ The Promise of Pain [Intimidation]

Requires Scary.

The character makes a promise (really, a threat) to a target, and makes an attack using Intimidation. If he scores a successful hit of one or better on the target's mental stress track, he may **spend a Fate point** to immediately force a psychological consequence instead. The consequence must represent an appropriate response (such as folding up in fear, or a broken spirit) to the threat.


AS WE FLEW UP THE SHAFT I NOTICED THAT MOON IN PERFECT ALIGNMENT. THE BRAIN IS IN THAT MOON.
YOU MEAN, THE MOON GIVES THE ORDERS AND ALL THAT STUFF DOWN THERE WAS MERELY A RELAY STATION.

✧ Steely Gaze [Intimidation]

Requires Scary.

Your character's unflinching gaze can lock an opponent in place. When a character with this Stunt looks an opponent in the eyes and makes an Intimidation check, it locks the two of them into a contest that will last until either something interrupts it or one of them flinches. Both characters are locked in a contest of wills, and can only take Intimidation actions against each other until one or the other either takes a consequence, concedes, or is interrupted (by, say, a gunshot). Any defense rolls made by either character againstan interrupting action while this is in effect is at -2.

✧ Fearsome Gaze [Intimidation]

Requires Steely Gaze.

Your character's gaze is so terrifying that those faced with it can end up paralyzed with fear. This Stunt is used in the same fashion as Steely Gaze, but if the opponent loses to the point of taking a consequence, he takes two consequences, one right after the other, immediately. Even if this means he's taken out, the target retains the option to concede after recording the consequence, thus keeping his right to define the nature of his defeat (subject to the gazer's approval).

✧ Master of Fear [Intimidation]

Requires Fearsome Gaze and Aura of Fear.

Your character is a master of the terrifying, and can have an entire room cowering within moments. When this character uses the Aura of Fear Stunt, he does not take the -2 penalty.

Furthermore, minions (see page 226) whose quality level is beat by the roll fail entirely and may not even roll to defend unless their leader discards his next action for the exchange to roll Leadership to defend them. Without a capable leader, these minions simply flee, faint, or otherwise take an immediate consequence, to the last man.

Investigation

(Skill, page 123)

Contemplation

✧ Scene of the Crime [Investigation]

The character has a strong visual memory, and whenever he revisits a place where he has used Investigation before, he may make an immediate use of Investigation in a matter of seconds in order to determine what changed since he was last there, as if it were an unusually detailed Alertness check.

✧ Eye for Detail [Investigation]

Requires Scene of the Crime.

Your character's visual memory is so strong that with a little concentration, he can revisit any place he's been to in his memory in exacting detail.
Sometimes, he can even pick up on details that he hadn't consciously realized before.

To use this ability, the character **spends a Fate point**, and may make a single perception based roll (usually Investigation, but not necessarily limited to that) to find things out as if he were still in the location, no matter how long ago he left the scene.

✧ Uncanny Hunch [Investigation]

Requires at least one other Investigation Stunt and one Empathy Stunt.

Sometimes your guesses play out to great advantage. Once per scene, you may make a guess about what the "deal" is with a particular character, object, location, or situation.

Do not speak this guess aloud; write it down on a piece of paper and give it to the Story Teller. The Story Teller must accept it as a valid hunch that would be something of a revelation if true (i.e., no "I'm convinced that moon orbits the Earth!" – that's too obvious). If, at some later point, your hunch proves to be correct, you may use your Investigation or Empathy Skill instead of any other Skill, where that target is concerned, for one exchange. (A savvy Story Teller will occasionally alter her characters' motives to match your hunches; if she does, that's absolutely perfect!)

Observation

✧ Lip Reading [Investigation]

The character may use Investigation to eavesdrop on conversations he can only see. If the Story Teller would normally allow someone to attempt to read lips, the difficulty is reduced by two; otherwise, you may simply roll Investigation when others may not.

✧ Focused Senses [Investigation]

The character is Skilled at concentrating on one of his senses to the exclusion of all others. The sense must be specified at the time this Stunt is taken. With a few moments of concentration, the character may enter a focused state. So long as he remains in that state, for as long as the character uses nothing but Investigation, all Investigation actions the character takes that use the specified sense gain a +2 bonus. While in this state, if the character needs to make a non-Investigation roll, that roll is at -2 due to this intense focus.

This Stunt may be taken multiple times, each time for a single sense. If the character has specified multiple senses, his focus may cover all of them at once.

✧ Impossible Detail [Investigation]

Requires Focused Senses.

When paying attention, the character's senses operate at a profound level of focus, allowing him to pick up on details that, very simply, no one else easily or even possibly could.

With this Stunt, the character faces no increased difficulties due to a physical detail being too small or subtle. As an example, this can reduce the difficulty to detect the presence of nearly any poison to Mediocre (as, honestly, subtlety is all it has to conceal itself).

The use of this Stunt may color what details a Story Teller chooses to reveal to a character as well, on a successful Investigation roll. Make sure to let the Story Teller know you have this Stunt whenever rolling Investigation.

As this involves a use of Investigation, it must still be a deliberate exploration, rather than a casual use better suited to Alertness.

✧ Quick Eye [Investigation]

The character is able to investigate a location much more quickly than others, while still being very thorough.

All Investigation efforts the character makes happen one to two time increments (page 237) faster than usual, allowing him to make one or two additional rolls in the same amount of time, or simply conclude his investigation faster than he would otherwise.

Leadership

(Skill, page 124)

Military Command

See the rules on Fleet combat on page 293 for details of how to run fleet engagements

✧ Squadron Leader [Leadership]

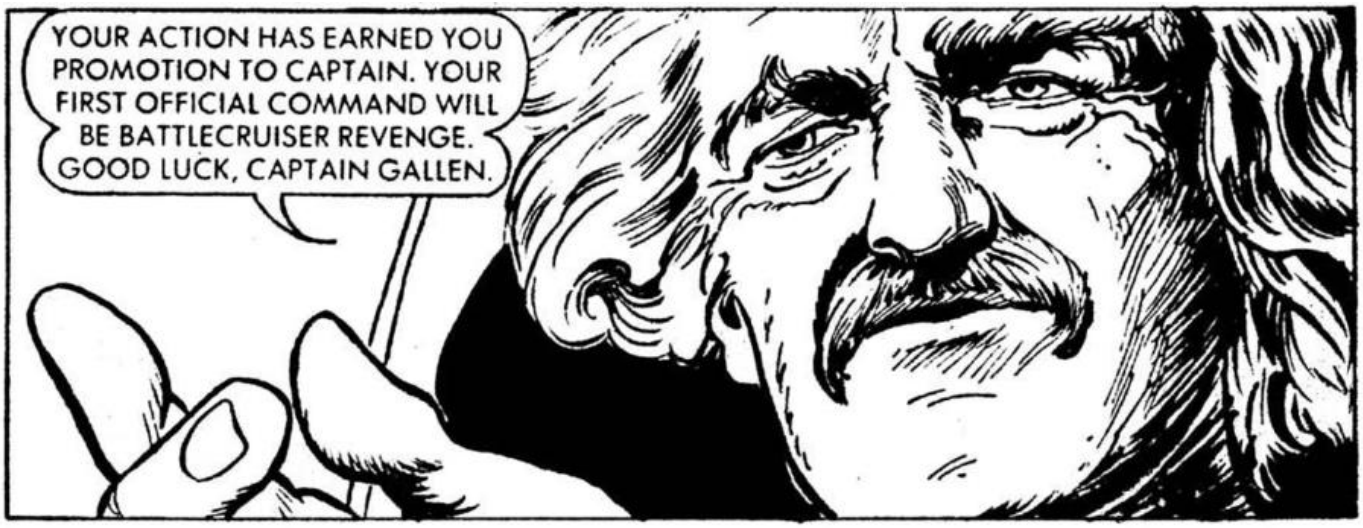
When commanding a squadron of fighters or larger ships, you can add a +1 to Leadership Skill rolls

✧ Fleet Commander [Leadership]

Requires Squadron Leader

When commanding a fleet you can add +1 to any Leadership Skill rolls

GOOD GRIEF! FEELTZ ZENDO, GANG BOSS OF THE ALDIHR QUADRANT. THE THIRD GALACTIC GANG BOSS I'VE RECOGNISED. WHY ARE THEY ALL ASSEMBLED HERE?


YOUR ACTION HAS EARNED YOU PROMOTION TO CAPTAIN. YOUR FIRST OFFICIAL COMMAND WILL BE BATTLECRUISER REVENGE. GOOD LUCK, CAPTAIN GALLEN.

✧ Admiral

Requires Fleet Commander [Leadership]

When commanding multiple fleets you can add +1 to any Leadership Skill rolls. This Stunt requires that the character is in a leadership position controlling several armed forces

✧ Quick Decisions Under Fire [Leadership]

Your cool head and quick thinking gets your ship or unit in to action fast. Add +1 to Alertness Skill rolls when outnumbered.

✧ Legendary Commander [Leadership]

Requires Admiral

You have an incredible reputation and a line of medals to prove it**. Pay a Fate point** and add +3 to a Leadership Skill roll in any naval or army combat situation. This Stunt requires that the character is in a leadership position within an armed force

Followers

✧ Personal Conspiracy [Leadership]

Taking this Stunt is an explicit indication that you are a member of some manner of major conspiracy; it's probably worth making sure you have an Aspect indicating as much. This Stunt functions identically to the Network of Contacts Stunt for Contacting (see page 152), but in a fashion that is both more and less powerful than that Stunt.

Whenever you call upon a functionary or thrall of your conspiracy, creating a companion on the fly, the companion is created with only one advance. If, instead, you're looking to call upon one of the movers and shakers in the conspiracy – not a peer, per se, but at least someone who's significantly more capable than a functionary – you may create the companion with one additional advance, instead. This companion receives the Independent advance for free.

Doing so, however, means that your conspiracy now has one or two needs you must fulfill – you immediately gain a temporary Aspect related to these needs, determined by the Story Teller, and may not refuse compels of this temporary Aspect whenever it comes up. Occasionally this temporary Aspect may instead reflect a hidden agenda on the part of your momentary companion, rather than an explicit "need".

✧ Lieutenant [Leadership]

You must take this Stunt two or three times.

You have a single, exceptional companion, well equipped to handle leadership duties in your stead. He is Fair quality, and has the Independent and Skilled (Leadership) advances for free (see page 228).

This Stunt must be taken multiple times, either two or three, in order to build an exceptionally capable companion. Taken twice, this Stunt lets you define 4 advances beyond the two free base advances. Taken three times, the Stunt allows you to define 2 additional advances and, in addition, promote your lieutenant to Good quality. If you've already promoted your lieutenant to Good quality, you may take a different advance.

✧ Minions [Leadership]

You have minions – lots of them. As a default, in a scene, you may have the bare minimum of minions easily on hand – two or three of Average quality (page 226).

You may make three upgrades to improve your minions, spent at the point you bring them into the scene. Each upgrade either adds three more to their number, or boosts the quality of three of them by one step (no minion can be more than Good quality).

This Stunt may be taken multiple times to increase the starting number of minions (taking it twice means you start out with five or six of Average quality) and the number of upgrades (taking it twice also means you have six upgrades). You must spend all of your upgrades at the start of the scene when you bring in your minions, but you needn't bring them all in right away.

✧ Reinforcements [Leadership]

Requires Minions.

During a fight, you may **spend a Fate point** to call in reinforcements. The reinforcements show up at the beginning of the next exchange. You may replace up to half your lost minions by doing so.

Law

✧ Legal Eagle [Leadership]

You are very-well acquainted with the law in any place you've spent a significant amount of time, and are Skilled at exploiting loopholes in it. You gain a +2 whenever using Leadership to deal with the law under such circumstances. Further, you are able to get legal paperwork processed one time increment (page 237) faster than normal.

✧ World Court [Leadership]

Requires Legal Eagle.

Your exposure to international law is so extensive that you're at ease in any situation involving legal wrangling, wherever you are. You never suffer any increased difficulty from a lack of familiarity with the laws of your locale; your experience is so broad that you either know it already, or can make highly educated guesses about how it functions.

Organizations

✧ Funding [Leadership]

You head an organization that is profitable. **Pay a Fate point** and your organization may temporarily increase a Resources Skill up to the value of your Leadership, regardless of whether or not you're present. When you personally make use of these resources it may take some time to filter through the power structure to reach you; the Story Teller may increase the time it takes to acquire something by one step.

✧ Born Leader [Leadership]

You're a natural leader of people and in an organisation of any size you can add +1 to an organisation Skill check. This Stunt provides no benefit unless the character is in leadership role in an organisation.

✧ Hero [Leadership]

Requires Born Leader

On the battlefield you lead your troops from the front whether it's on the ground or in space, giving them a +1 bonus to your organisations relevant Arms or Security Skill checks. This Stunt provides no benefit unless the character is in military or security leadership role in an organisation.

✧ Master Diplomat [Leadership]

Requires Born Leader

You know the court and government inside out. You gain a +1 in any organisation diplomacy Skill checks. This Stunt provides no benefit unless the character is in leadership role in an organisation.

✧ Emperor, President or Tyrant [Leadership]

Requires Hero or Master Diplomat

You excel at leading the people, controlling them or lying to them. Your presence or even your attention causes considerable pride or fear amongst your staff, soldiers, diplomats or intelligence services. Gain a bonus of +1 to all organisation Skill checks or **pay a Fate point** and gain a +3 if you can be present at the centre of the action with all the risks that entails.

This Stunt provides no benefit unless the character is in leadership role in an organisation.

✧ Instant Functionary [Leadership]

You're Skilled at seeing the shape of an organization from the underside, and in organizations of sufficient size, you can easily convince anyone that you're just another cog in the machine. This allows you to substitute your Leadership Skill for Deceit whenever pretending to fill the role of a minor functionary of a target organization.

✧ Center of the Web [Leadership]

Whether or not you lead it, you are like the spider at the center of a web regarding any organization of which you are a part. Information about the organization flows your way naturally, taking one time increment less to reach your attentive ears than it would normally, and so long as you are able to make any sort of contact with the outside world, you are quickly able to find out information about your organization's dealings. Your Leadership shifts may be spent to improve the speed of information by up to two additional steps with Story Teller's approval.

✧ Ubiquity [Leadership]

Requires Center of the Web.

First, this Stunt steps up the intensity of your Center of the Web Stunt – information flows your way a total of two time increments faster. Second, this Stunt removes the restriction "so long as you are able to make any sort of contact with the outside world ." Your ties into the organization are so thoroughly widespread that the outside world makes every

reasonable effort to stay in contact with you. For a Fate point, your organization can even make some fairly unreasonable efforts to stay in contact.

Might

(Skill, page 125)

Force

✧ Herculean Strength [Might]

The character is incredibly strong, capable of lifting great weights. All weight-based difficulties that don't involve combat are reduced by two steps. See page 126 for more on weights.

✧ Piledriver [Might]

Requires Herculean Strength.

The character is capable of landing powerful blows with hammer-like force. At their best, these blows can rip apart steel cages and knock down walls. A character with Piledriver adds four to his attacks with Might against inanimate targets.

✧ Unbound [Might]

If you are physically restrained in some fashion – be it by chains or a mob of people – you receive a +2 bonus to your Might in your efforts to break out of those bonds.

Combined with Piledriver (above), the character simply cannot be held in place by most mundane methods.

✧ Unstoppable [Might]

Requires Herculean Strength and at least one other Might Stunt.

Once in motion, this character is very difficult to stop due to his sheer muscular force.

The character may use Might rather than Athletics for move actions; this includes sprinting (see page 218). Furthermore, all blocks to his movement, including borders which can be "smashed" through, are considered to be two lower.

Wrestling

✧ Wrestler [Might]

Requires one other Might Stunt.

The character is a trained wrestler. The character may use their Might Skill instead of Fists in combat.

✧ Body Toss [Might]

Requires Wrestler.

You know how to apply your strength in a fight to take people off their feet. Whenever making a Throw or a Push manoeuvre (page 225), you may consider the target to weigh one weight factor (page 126) less than usual.

✧ Hammerlock [Might]

Requires Wrestler.

Whenever you perform a block action (see page 217) by personally grabbing hold of someone, you do so at +1. Any time that person tries to break through the block and fails, you may inflict a single point of stress.

Mysteries

(Skill, page 127)

Artefacts

✧ Artificer [Mysteries]

The character is capable of using Mysteries to improve artefacts (mystic gadgets or very strange alien artefacts, essentially) in the same fashion that Engineering does, albeit on radically different principles (see Gadgetry page 80). "Devices" worked on in this fashion will be clearly arcane or alien in appearance and will work on principles that may make no sense to logical men. You may include some advances that are not available to "normal" Engineering.

This sort of work requires an arcane or alien workshop in the same way that engineering requires a regular workshop (page 132).

✧ Personal Artefact [Mysteries]

An artefact is a magical or alien item or device that does... something. As far as game rules go, it is identical in function to a gadget (see the Stunt by that name under Engineering, page 161), though you may have some broader leeway to describe what it can do, given that it's based on magic or ancient alien technology. Certain unusual upgrades may be incorporated into the design as well.

This Stunt may be taken multiple times, but multiple Artefacts may not be combined the way Personal Gadgets can be (as described in the Stunt on page 161).

✧ Rare Artefact [Mysteries]

You may introduce an artefact that you design on-the-fly, in a fashion similar to the Universal Gadget Stunt (see page 161).

Because this is an artefact, however, a few differences exist. The artefact gets three improvements, same as a Personal Artefact, instead of only two improvements, the way a Universal Gadget does. Furthermore, this Stunt may be taken multiple times and, unlike a Personal Artefact, may combine those improvements into a single, more potent artefact.

There is, however, a downside…

All Rare Artefacts inevitably have origins shrouded in darkness and mystery. In order to introduce such an artefact into play, the character must take on a temporary Aspect which vaguely, colorfully references the secret (and unknown) past of the artefact. The Story Teller may then incorporate its dark past into the storyline, hitting the character with compels as appropriate. For example The Demon Sword's owner is destined to rule the world, but is also cursed to kill its owner. This might place an Aspect of 'Cursed to die by the Demon Sword' on the character which could be compelled.

Hypnosis

✧ Mesmerist [Mysteries]

The character is adept at using his Mysteries Skill as described under Mesmerism (page 127). When helping another character to remember things with hypnosis, the other character's Skills are not limited in any way, and in fact may be complemented by the hypnotist's Mysteries Skill.

Further, rolls with a willing target – even if that target is not actively participating – are always at +2, as if the target was actively participating (see page 127). Finally, the time it takes to put someone into a trance is reduced by one step, if applicable.

✧ Hypnotic Speech [Mysteries]

Requires Mesmerist.

When interacting with others socially, you are able to weave the patterns and methods of mesmerism into your words, potentially putting someone you're talking to into a partial trance – even without them realizing.

Provided you have had several minutes of calm conversation with another character as a preamble, you may start using your Mysteries Skill instead of Rapport or Deceit. You may not make such a substitution if the conversation becomes strongly charged with emotion or if other distractions surface to break the air of calm. This Stunt works even when dealing with an unwilling subject (in part because it simply allows you to substitute Mysteries for the perfectly normal functions of Rapport and Deceit).

✧ Mind's Shadow [Mysteries]

Requires Mesmerist.

Whenever you have someone in a full trance, you may plant false memories, or remove existing memories. The partial trance resulting from the Hypnotic Speech Stunt does not count – this must be a full trance, which is usually only possible with a willing target. Unwilling trances resulting from the Enthrall Stunt do, however, count.

To use this ability, for each memory to be planted or removed, roll your Mysteries Skill. The result indicates the difficulty for someone to recognize the memories as missing or false, as well as the difficulty – for the subject or another mesmerist – to penetrate the shadow you have lain over their mind.

✧ Enthrall [Mysteries]

Requires Mind's Shadow and Hypnotic Speech.

You are able to place even unwilling subjects into a hypnotic trance by using Mysteries as an out-and-out attack.

This works best with a restrained subject, but so long as a target can hear the sound of your voice, you have a chance to begin your workings upon him. Targets who are not restrained or forced to be a captive audience defend with their Resolve at +2, though a full defense action does not help them further.

You may approach this mental assault in one of two ways – either as a manoeuvre, placing a temporary Aspect that will only last the scene, or as an attack that inflicts composure stress.

Manoeuvres will be short-lived, but may be easier and more useful for immediate effects. If you're looking to lay on something more profound, you must attack for stress instead.

If you inflict enough stress to indicate a consequence, concession, or taken out result, the results must "play along" with the goals of your hypnotic attack. Such results still can't force a character to do something completely contrary to his nature, but there

BUT CAN'T YOU FEEL SOMETHING? AN AIR OF MENACE?
SEEMS DESERTED!
YEAH! THE WHOLE PLACE SEEMS TO HAVE GONE QUIETLY MAD.
IT'S THE MACHINES. HAVE YOU NOTICED?

B

should still be a lot of latitude in terms of what sorts of compulsions you can place in the mind of your victim.

It's easy to use this Stunt improperly... and if you do, people are in the right to label you as a villain.

Secrets

✧ Fortuneteller [Mysteries]

The character is unusually adept at predicting the shape of future events. With this Stunt, he may make two predictions per session, instead of the usual one.

✧ Herbal Remedies [Mysteries]

You have specialized in non-traditional medicine to such an extent that it is many ways superior to modern medicine – even if most might scoff or not understand.

In the wilderness, you can find medical supplies easily, and may roll Mysteries instead of Survival to find such things; further, you may roll Mysteries instead of Science in order to perform first aid or proper medical care (see page 135). Using this Stunt, you face no penalties for using unorthodox "tools".

✧ Palm Reader [Mysteries]

Using palm reading or other techniques of personal examination (such as phrenology and aura consultation), you may make a single Mysteries roll as if you were using Empathy. This usually only takes a few minutes, so if you can get someone to be willing to be read, it can sometimes yield information faster than a standard Empathy read would.

At the player's option, this may be combined with a second Mysteries roll to make a fortune-telling prediction, either before or after the palm-reading roll, so long as the player's not past his per-session limit. Such predictions must focus on the character being read.

✧ Secrets of the Arcane / Aliens [Mysteries]

The character is respected authority in a specific occult or alien field. Possibilities include ancient mythology, alien legends, psychic phenomena, cryptozoology, and so on. In the elite circles of that particular field, the character is recognized for his expertise. Even if his Skill level is low, it merely means he is towards the bottom of that particular group of the elite.

This Stunt is, essentially, the Mysteries parallel of the Scholar Stunt, under Academics (see page 146). When the character makes a Mysteries roll pertaining to his general area of expertise, he automatically receives a +1 knowledge bonus. Beyond this, the character should pick a specific area of specialization within that area (like extraterrestrial demonology, or xenomorphic symbology – the more syllables the better). When a Mysteries roll involves that specialization, he gains an additional +1 bonus (for a total +2 to the value of the research effort). Any research efforts involving the specialization take one unit less time.

Spirits

✧ Psychic [Mysteries]

You are open to the strange and paranormal – though sometimes that means letting in the Unpleasant Things from the Darkness and other such nuisances.

Normally, a character may be called upon by the Story Teller to roll Mysteries as a kind of paranormal Alertness Skill, to pick up on the surface strangeness in a place or it can be used to defend against a strange power attack instead of using Resolve. With this Stunt, you may deliberately use your Mysteries Skill to gain some mystic or terrible insight into the occult "climate" of an area, as if it were Investigation – using a similar time-frame and gaining a similar level of (paranormal) detail.

This also means that you may use Mysteries instead of Alertness when surprised, if the origin of the surprise is in some way supernatural, and can even use Mysteries as your initiative Skill when locked in a conflict with otherworldly forces.

Used with this Stunt, Mysteries can give you access to information that would normally be impossible to get – though the Story Teller is under no obligation to give you that information in any clear fashion. Muddled riddles and vague intimations are the mode of the day.

There is an additional catch: Using this ability may open you up to an unpleasant psychic attack by the presence or residue of Unnatural Creatures that have touched the area ... but at least you've learned something.

✧ Spirit Companion [Mysteries]

You have a companion with three advances (as described on page 227). This companion is vulnerable to

the flux of the spiritual aether, however, and must be summoned into your presence – either **pay a Fate point** to get his immediate manifestation or take roughly a minute to roll Mysteries against a target equal to the companion's quality as a more gentle summoning.

This companion can never act in physical conflict, but may be visible to others; this may limit what Skills he can use with the Skilled advance. He automatically gains the Independent advance as well. The companion will need to take Skilled (Stealth) if he wishes to be undetectable on occasion; otherwise, visible or not, his presence in a location is an immediate call for people to roll Mysteries to notice something amiss.

If you take this Stunt a second time (the maximum) you may provide another three advances to your companion. If you have not yet increased the companion's quality to at least Fair, you must spend one of your advances to do so.

✧ Voices from Beyond [Mysteries]

Requires Psychic.

Given time to prepare and perform the ritual, the character may perform a real, functioning séance to try to call out to spirits dead or never living. A Mysteries roll must be made against a difficulty set by the Story Teller, in order to cause a particular spirit to manifest.

Summoned spirits are not under any sort of compulsion to be cooperative, and may have their own agendas, but once summoned, they may speak through the character with others in attendance. At the Story Teller's option, especially if the summoner gains spin on her Mysteries roll, the spirit may even manifest visibly.

Should the spirit be malicious in any fashion, or wish to escape the summons, the character may use Mysteries or Resolve as his Skill of choice when struggling with the spirit.

✧ Words on the Wind [Mysteries]

Requires Psychic.

There are patterns to things that are not always obvious, even to the wise.

This character looks in the right places, and hears the right things. Once per session, when he is not otherwise occupied, he may request an omen from the Story Teller, and roll Mysteries against a target of Mediocre. The Story Teller will use the results to guide her decision about how obscure the information gained is. It may be as arcane as a snippet of a riddle, or as mundane as news that a strange shipment is coming into the docks at midnight.

Pilot

(Skill, page 129)

Flight

✧ Flying Jock [Pilot]

This pilot can squeeze his plane through places where it has no business fitting. Normally, a pilot can **spend a Fate point** for a coincidence or declaration to assure that the plane has enough clearance space to fly through. Characters with this Stunt never need to spend a Fate point: if it could fit, it can. What's

more, if your character does spend a Fate point, he can fit the plane in places it absolutely should not be able to. This Stunt is also useful for landing planes in improbably tight quarters.

✧ Flawless Navigation [Pilot]

The skies are an open map in the character's mind. Unless bizarre circumstances are afoot, he can never get lost in flight. If something strange is happening the difficulties to his Pilot rolls are never reduced by more than 2.

✧ Fly by Night [Pilot]

Whether in dead of night or during a storm, your character's piloting Skills remain true. The character never faces increased difficulties due to environmental factors (darkness, weather) when flying. This does not protect his plane from taking damage from the environment – but his Skill remains unreduced.

✧ Flying Ace [Pilot]

The character is a Skilled combat pilot, and may use his Pilot Skill to attack in a dogfight, assuming the plane is suitably armed. Normally, a pilot uses Pilot on his defense actions, and must use Guns in order to attack (similar to someone on foot using Athletics for defense and Guns for offense).

✧ Death From Above [Pilot]

Requires Flying Ace.

The character's combat flight experience makes him a deadly force when he gets the upper hand. While in flight, if he is able to make an attack on another flying target from an elevated position, he does two additional points of stress on a successful hit.

This Stunt can't be used two exchanges in a row; whenever making such an attack, the acrobatics take him out of his position of advantage.

✧ Walk Away From It [Pilot]

Requires at least two other Pilot Stunts.

The character has a great instinct for crash-landing planes, and is able to walk away from even the most catastrophic-seeming landings. While the character is piloting a plane into its crash landing, he and his passengers get the benefits of the Death Defiance Stunt (see page 160), and are all considered "out of sight" when the plane crashes.

Planes

✧ Personal Aircraft [Pilot]

You have a personal aircraft that you own or have the exclusive right to fly. In all respects, this Stunt functions like the Custom Ride Stunt (page 156). Refer to that Stunt for details.

✧ Prototype Aircraft [Pilot]

Requires Personal Aircraft.

Identical to the Prototype Vehicle Stunt (on page 156), but for your plane.

✧ Plane Mechanic [Pilot]

Requires at least two other Pilot Stunts.

Your character may not understand the broader Aspects of engineering devices and such, but when it comes to planes, he knows them inside and out. Whenever working on a plane, you may use your Pilot Skill instead of Engineering. Due to some shared principles, you may work on other vehicles at a -1.

Rapport

(Skill, page 129)

Charisma

✧ Best Foot Forward [Rapport]

You're adept at making first impressions – sometimes you might not improve the preconceived attitude someone holds towards you, but you can at least assure you don't get off on the wrong foot when you meet for the first time.

Whenever rolling to make a first impression with an Extra, no matter how severe the failure, you cannot cause them to have a lower or more negative opinion of you than they already had, unless you're making an active effort in that direction.

In rules terms, this means that if your target ever gains spin on an impression "defense" (see page 130), it does not cause his attitude to degrade by one step.

✧ Five Minute Friends [Rapport]

For a Fate point, you can make a steadfast friend in a place you've never been, given a chance for five minutes of conversation. This Stunt makes nearly impossible opportunities to make friends merely improbable, improbable opportunities probable, and probable opportunities outright certain.

✧ Intergalatic [Rapport]

The character's mastery of etiquette leaves him comfortable, and even glib, in any situation. The character never suffers any penalties or increased difficulty from unfamiliarity with his setting, making it easy to manoeuvre through local customs he hasn't encountered before, and to cover up any gaffes with a laugh and a sparkle in his eye.

✧ Ladies' Man/'It' Girl [Rapport]

You're adept at catching the eye of the opposite sex, and keeping it once you've got it. Any seduction attempts you make with Rapport receive a +2 technique bonus provided the target is someone who could be receptive to it (this is not always a simple case of gender and preference).

Wordplay

✧ Blather [Rapport]

It's not that you're a good liar – possibly far from it. It's more that you have a Skill at talking so fast, and not letting the other guy get a word in edgewise, that he doesn't ever get the chance to figure out if you're lying or not.

With this Stunt, so long as you can keep talking, you can cover up increasingly ludicrous lies. Start your fast-talk conversation with your target as a contest between your Rapport and their Resolve or Rapport. If you win, the conversation continues, and you repeat the roll on the next exchange. If you fail, no matter how poorly, you can spend a Fate point to continue the conversation as if you had won.

So long as you can keep talking uninterrupted and continue to spend Fate points to defer any failures, your endless blathering will prevent your target from realizing quite what you're doing. For the duration of the conversation, the difficulty of any perception (usually Alertness) checks by the target are based off your base Rapport Skill, or your last successful roll, whichever value is higher.

The target of this effort is by no means helpless – if they are attacked or otherwise disturbed they may respond normally, and they will respond to obvious stimuli (friends being attacked in their line of sight, fire alarms going off and such). However, the target is definitely distracted. When using this ability on multiple opponents at once, they each get to defend, and you take a -1 penalty for each opponent past the first. Of course, once you stop talking, it may be time for a quick exit.

✧ Heart on My Sleeve [Rapport]

You're a regular stand up guy with no secrets, at least so far as anyone can tell. But even so, you're in control of which part of your best face you're putting forward. Whenever using the Opening Up tactic (see page 130) to "defend" against an Empathy read, you gain a +1 on your Rapport roll. If you gain spin on your defense, you may substitute one alternate true, non-trivial fact about yourself instead of revealing an Aspect.

The reader must still get an insight into you if you're providing a fact; it's just not necessarily one that has the weight of an Aspect.

✧ The Right Questions [Rapport]

Smaller parts of a larger truth can contain a blueprint of the whole – and as a Skilled conversationalist, you are adept at pulling the larger truth out of a single individual. Provided the person you're talking to is at least neutral towards you, you may use your Rapport Skill instead of Contacting for any effort to gather information (see page 109). The results are limited and colored by the knowledge available to your chat partner, but it's always possible he doesn't know that he knows certain things, and as such, your acquaintance effectively acts as a small "cluster" of contacts.

✧ Smooth Over [Rapport]

You're adept at stepping into a bad situation and dialing it down to something more reasonable. So long as you are not the direct reason someone is upset, your attempts to calm them down using your Rapport receive a +2 bonus.

Resolve

(Skill, page 131)

Cool

✧ Smooth Recovery [Resolve]

While most characters with Resolve can keep things together under stress, for your character it is second nature, allowing him to regain his footing in the face of even the direst of outcomes outside of physical conflict. This Stunt allows the character to take one additional moderate, social or mental consequence than normal, allowing him to take up to four total consequences of that variety.

✧ Cool Customer [Resolve]

Requires Smooth Recovery.

The character is so at ease in times of social stress that nothing seems to dent his calm regard of the situation. The character may take a full action once per exchange to roll his Resolve against a target of Mediocre.

If successful, he may remove a checkmark in his first mental stress box (at the one-point stress position). If he desires, after a successful roll, he may instead **spend a Fate point** and remove any single composure stress track box of a value equal to or less than the shifts he gained on his roll.

✧ Aplomb [Resolve]

Requires Smooth Recovery.

When possible, the character's composure stress track rolls down instead of up. Whenever the character's composure stress would roll up to the next empty box, it instead rolls down to the first empty box of a lesser value. If there are no available boxes of a lesser value, the stress rolls up normally.

✧ Unflappable [Resolve]

Requires Smooth Recovery.

The character is simply not prone to fear. While Intimidation efforts against him might provoke other emotions, they can rarely scare him; he gains a +2 to his Resolve when defending against a purely fear-based Intimidation action.

✧ Right Place, Right Time [Resolve]

Requires Unflappable.

The character seems to always be in a safe spot, without moving in any obvious way. When engaged in physical combat, characters with this Stunt may use Resolve as their combat Skill when defending, and may also use it to move or take cover (so long as they merely saunter; no sprints allowed).

To the outside world, it appears that the character is simply staying put and unfazed as gunfire and other attacks miss him by scant inches, or is picking up his undisturbed martini as the alien rushes past. Circumstance conspires to leave the character undisturbed so long as his defense is not beaten.

Tenacity

✧ Inner Strength [Resolve]

Whenever someone is trying to get inside your head – be it through psychic or strange power means (for example with some mesmerism Stunts), or through extensive torture – you receive a +2 to your Resolve defense even without resorting to a full defense action. If you do go for a full defense, you may, but it only nets you a +3 in total.

✧ Steel Determination [Resolve]

It is apparent to all around you exactly how far you are willing to go in order to get what you want. You may, when you bluntly speak your true intentions in a social interaction, trigger the effects of this Stunt, immediately gaining a +1 bonus which applies to all subsequent Intimidation or Resolve rolls, as well as any social defense, in that scene. However, if you do this, you may no longer use Rapport with the same audience, as you have peeled away the façade of civility.

✧ Still Standing [Resolve]

Requires Inner Strength.

This character simply does not know when to quit. The character may take one additional moderate consequence of any type. This allows the character to

WELCOME ABOARD, CAPTAIN DETTMAR. WHILE YOU SURRENDERED I TRANSPORTED MYSELF UP THEIR GRAVBEAM . . . AND NOW I'VE DEALT WITH THE CREW.

THE PIRATE CRAFT CAME IN TO LAND IN THE SPACEDOCK.
YOU SEE, RYDER? WE STORE OUR CAPTURED GOODS HERE AND SELL THEM TO SPACE MERCHANTS WHO ARE PREPARED TO DEAL. A PROFITABLE BUSINESS FOR US ALL.

take a total of four consequences in any conflict and, if combined with Feel the Burn (page 160), can allow the character to take up to five in a physical conflict. Similarly, it may be combined with Smooth Recovery (page 182) to take up to five consequences in a social or mental conflict.

✧ Driven [Resolve]

Requires Still Standing.

The character draws inspiration from his setbacks, no matter what the circumstances. A character with this Stunt is always considered to have an inspiration rationale to spend Fate points to invoke any of the consequences he has taken for rerolls and bonuses; no other justification is necessary.

✧ Unyielding [Resolve]

Requires Driven.

The character's force of will is enough to keep him going in the direst of circumstances. Any time the character takes health stress (any one hit), he may **spend a Fate point** to instead take two 1-point hits of composure stress.

Resources

(Skill, page 131)

Advantage

✧ Grease the Wheels [Resources]

Money talks, especially in the halls of bureaucratic power. Whenever the character is in a situation where bribes will be accepted, he may use his Resources Skill whenever he would otherwise use Leadership instead.

✧ Money Talks [Resources]

Rather than go looking for something, one can always just offer a reward. The character may spread some money around and use Resources in lieu of Contacting to attempt to find somebody or something. He doesn't literally need to offer a reward, but it is necessary that he make an obvious display of wealth in some venue or another, preferably waving a certain colour of credit card in the face of people in the know (or people who know people in the know). The downside of this approach is that it tends to be highly public, at least within some circles, and anyone interested will know what the character is looking for.

Comfort

✧ Headquarters [Resources]

One of your character's properties—one location that functions as a Library, Lab, Workshop, Galactic Library, or Alien Workshop (see page 132)—qualifies as a full-blown private headquarters, such as a mansion or a secret cave. The quality of this facility is equal to your Resources Skill or Resources+1 in the case of a specialized function.

In addition, the headquarters may include one of the following extra elements:

Expert Staff. Your headquarters has a small staff of competent individuals: two with Average Skill at something (choose the Skill when defining the staff member), and a head or lauded functionary with a peak Skill of Fair. These are, within the bounds of your headquarters, companions whom you may call on to assist you. They are bound to the location, and can't ever leave it without losing their companion qualities (they effectively drop to Mediocre outside of their home environs). With another Stunt, you may convert one of these staff members into a Trusted Employee (see page 186).

Secondary Facility. Your base facility normally serves one primary function – Library, Lab, Workshop, Arcane Library, or Arcane Workshop. This extra allows you to define a second function that operates at a quality level equal to your Resources minus 3.

Extensive Security. Security measures make your headquarters difficult to compromise. All difficulties for bypassing your headquarters' security are increased by one.

Utmost Secrecy. The location of your headquarters is tantamount to a state secret. Few know of it, and even those located nearby may be unaware. The difficulty of any Investigation or Contacting roll to find the location of your lair is equal to your Resources.

Communications Center. Your headquarters is the nerve center of a number of vital channels of communication. Any communications routed to, from, or through your base take one time increment less to get to where they're going, due to the efficiencies offered.

✧ Lair [Resources]

Requires Headquarters.
The character's headquarters has three elements (rather than one).

✧ Stately Pleasure Dome [Resources]

Requires Lair.
The character's lair is very much a wonder of the world. Not only does it have all of the possible elements listed above, but one of them may be traded out for something unique and distinctive, such as:

- A world class lab (adding another 2 to the quality of one of the facilities and speeding the rate of research by one increment).
- An exotic location (just outside Atlantis, on the moon, etc .), including a means of dedicated transport for reaching it.
- A larger and highly competent staff (the facility head is of Good quality, and there are two Fair and three Average staff members).

It's even possible that this distinctive element is something weird, like having your headquarters be mobile (movement is slow; the rate of movement will never compete with a full-on vehicle or plane, and finding places to park is an absolute pain).

✧ Home Away From Home [Resources]

Normally, a character may have a single Library, Lab, Workshop, Arcane Library, or Arcane Workshop of a quality equal to his Resources-2 (see page 132). With this Stunt, he has a second such property in a different location; he may specify the location during play (at which point it becomes locked in), or in advance.

✧ Trusted Employee [Resources]

Requires a Headquarters with the Expert Staff element.
Choose one member of your staff – usually the person who qualifies as head of the facility. This person may now accompany you as a full-on companion (see page 227), including retaining her companion status outside your headquarters. She automatically has the quality level indicated by your headquarters Stunts, and the Independent advance; you may choose three other advances for her as well (including increasing her quality to Good, if you haven't done so through the other Stunts).

Liquidity

✧ Best That Money Can Buy [Resources]

You have a discerning taste and a natural instinct for spending your money to get exactly the best and nothing less. You are at +1 to your Resources whenever making a purchase of something that would be considered "the best ." While this may seem like a discount, it's not, really, since seeking out the best may mandate a price mark several steps above the baseline; still, this Stunt helps to soften the blow.

✧ Long Term Investment [Resources]

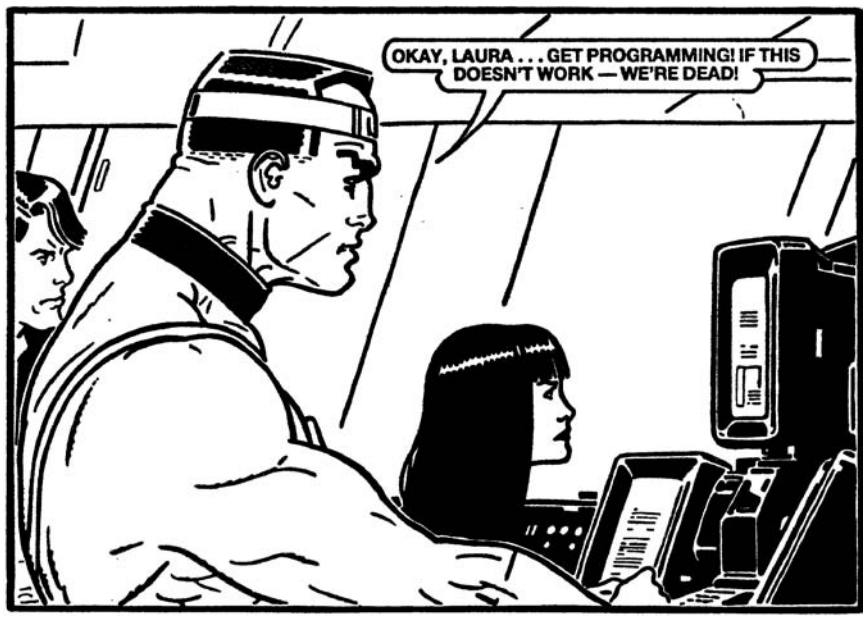
You've had your money for a while now, and you've had a chance to make several strategic investments which you can cash in on when pressed for money. Once per session, you may sell one of these investments to get a +2 to any one Resources roll, as if you had spent a Fate point to invoke an Aspect.

✧ Money Is No Object [Resources]

Requires two other Resources Stunts.
Once per session, when called on to roll Resources, you may **spend a Fate point** and simply act as if you had rolled +5 on the dice. You may do this after the fact on a roll, and further may combine this with the effect from Long Term Investment to easily achieve a result of your Resources +6 (and, if it's the Best That Money Can Buy, +7) – usually good enough to purchase almost anything.

THE SHIP TOUCHED DOWN WITHIN A MASSIVE HANGAR—
I'M SURE THE LEO'S HAVE NO INKLING THIS PLACE EXISTS. FURGAAR IS MORE RESOURCEFUL THAN EVER I GAVE HIM CREDIT FOR.

If you use this Stunt, your Resources Skill will then operate at -2 for the rest of the session; you've simply tapped into everything at your disposal to make the purchase.



Science

(Skill, page 133)

Computers & Hacking

✧ Computer Specialist [Science]

You know computers inside out and get a +1 when attempting to program or hack a system.

✧ Hacker [Science]

Requires Computer Specialist

You're possibly famous for some of your hacking attempts in the past. When you've got access to your own computer and hacking kit you get a further +1 on hacking rolls and can reduce the time to accomplish a hacking task involving a lengthy period of time by one level. Trace attempts are at a -1 difficulty as you've set up your home or "work" space to be as covert as possible when it comes to dealing with computer systems.

✧ Web Head [Science]

You know how to find anything and anyone using the many search tools on the galactic web. You can use Science instead of Contacting to gather information on a target, location, organisation or object.

Medicine

✧ Forensic Medicine [Science]

Your Skill with Science gives you a distinct insight into certain kinds of investigations. When appropriate, you may use your Science Skill instead of Investigation, particularly when the subject involves medical evidence. If the Story Teller believes that you would normally roll Science for such an effort (such as performing an autopsy) then the difficulty of the investigation drops by two steps (but never below Mediocre).

✧ Doctor [Science]

The character has a singular ability to help the wounded recover from their ills. Whenever rolling Science to provide first aid or proper medical attention (see page 135), the roll is made at +2. A character with this Stunt may choose to have a medical degree, or at least certification to act as a paramedic, nurse, or other medical professional.

✧ Medic [Science]

Requires Doctor.

The character is talented at delivering medical care in the field. Normally, someone providing first aid can remove a checkmark for every two shifts gained on the roll (see page 135). With this Stunt, every shift past the first one improves the level of stress that may be removed (so three shifts will remove a checkmark up to the three-stress mark, rather than the two-stress mark). If the character rolls well enough to remove a stress mark that is higher than the subject's physical stress capacity (e.g., 6 or more shifts for a character who has Mediocre Endurance), he may even remove a minor, physical consequence.

✧ Surgeon [Science]

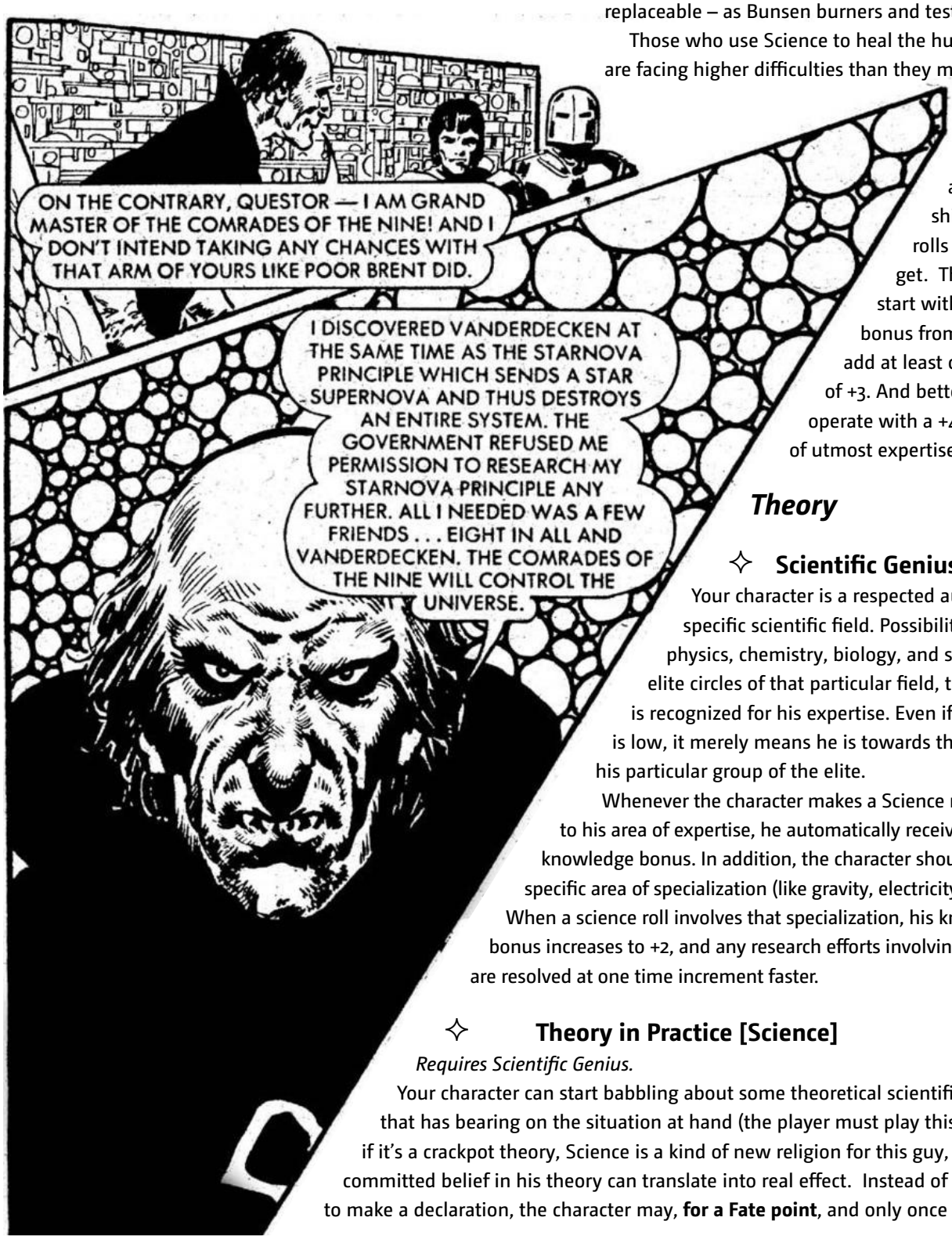
Requires Doctor.

You're not only a doctor, you're at the forefront of medical Science in action. Your character is a respected authority in a specific field of surgical or therapeutic medicine; define it at the time you take this Stunt. Possibilities include heart or brain surgery, transplant operations, disease pathologies, and so on; your character has the opportunity to break new ground ahead of the actual technological curve.

In the elite circles of the chosen field, the character is recognized for his expertise. Even if his Skill level is low, it merely means he is towards the bottom of that particular elite group.

When the character makes a Science roll to perform surgery or other intensive medical work, he acts at +1. In addition, when the roll involves his specific area of specialization, he gets an additional +1 and may remove the difficulty increase of any one factor affecting the operation (such as poor facilities, or a lack of a particular supply, etc). This Stunt combines with the Doctor Stunt for a large bonus – which is only right, because practicing medicine is particularly hard, and patients are not as understanding – or replaceable – as Bunsen burners and test tubes.

Those who use Science to heal the human body are facing higher difficulties than they might in other fields and, in game terms, they can use all the extra shifts on those rolls that they can get. Thus, surgeons start with the +2 bonus from Doctor, and add at least one, for a total of +3. And better yet, they operate with a +4 in their area of utmost expertise.


ON THE CONTRARY, QUESTOR — I AM GRAND MASTER OF THE COMRADES OF THE NINE! AND I DON'T INTEND TAKING ANY CHANCES WITH THAT ARM OF YOURS LIKE POOR BRENT DID.
I DISCOVERED VANDERDECKEN AT THE SAME TIME AS THE STARNOVA PRINCIPLE WHICH SENDS A STAR SUPERNOVA AND THUS DESTROYS AN ENTIRE SYSTEM. THE GOVERNMENT REFUSED ME PERMISSION TO RESEARCH MY STARNOVA PRINCIPLE ANY FURTHER. ALL I NEEDED WAS A FEW FRIENDS . . . EIGHT IN ALL AND VANDERDECKEN. THE COMRADES OF THE NINE WILL CONTROL THE UNIVERSE.

Theory

✧ Scientific Genius [Science]

Your character is a respected authority in a specific scientific field. Possibilities include physics, chemistry, biology, and so on. In the elite circles of that particular field, the character is recognized for his expertise. Even if his Skill level is low, it merely means he is towards the bottom of his particular group of the elite.

Whenever the character makes a Science roll pertaining to his area of expertise, he automatically receives a +1 knowledge bonus. In addition, the character should pick a specific area of specialization (like gravity, electricity or reptiles). When a science roll involves that specialization, his knowledge bonus increases to +2, and any research efforts involving the specialty are resolved at one time increment faster.

✧ Theory in Practice [Science]

Requires Scientific Genius.

Your character can start babbling about some theoretical scientific principle that has bearing on the situation at hand (the player must play this out). Even if it's a crackpot theory, Science is a kind of new religion for this guy, and his committed belief in his theory can translate into real effect. Instead of using Science to make a declaration, the character may, **for a Fate point**, and only once per scene,

use his Science Skill to substitute for nearly any other Skill, subject to the Story Teller's approval. If the roll generates no shifts, the scientist takes a minor consequence (such as "Crestfallen" or "Crackpot") to reflect the weight of his failure for the rest of the scene. Otherwise, great! It works!

✧ Scientific Invention [Science]

Requires Scientific Genius.

You are able to create new devices and upgrade existing technology as per the gadgets rules (see page 80), using Science instead of Engineering. You don't, however, have any Skill at creating or repairing completely "normal" technology – stuff that wouldn't involve the gadget rules at all to work on.

✧ Weird Science [Science]

Requires Scientific Invention.

You may create and upgrade gadgets to use any improvements that are marked as requiring Weird Science. This lets you design and create items that have capabilities that don't yet exist in ***Starblazer Adventures***, among other things (see page 80).

Furthermore, you may collaborate with another character Skilled in Engineering to enable that character to create and change items based on Weird Science; if you do so, your Science Skill restricts that character's Engineering.

Working with an engineer, a scientist with this Stunt enables his engineer partner to include Weird Science improvements for a single improvement allocation on one of his personal or universal gadgets.

✧ Mad Science [Science]

Requires Weird Science.

You are able to create devices that even a member of your culture would deem impossible, unlikely, or simply too advanced for your race's present capabilities. Unconventional construction methods, Starships that run on brainpower, and other bizarre effects are all possible.

Your Mad Science must have a theme (such as "Astraade Menin's Psi-Tech Control System's"), which you must define when you take this Stunt. Any Mad Science improvements you incorporate into devices must fit this theme (but with a little creativity, most concepts can fit a sufficiently flexible theme).

As with the Weird Science Stunt (above), a mad scientist may collaborate with an engineer in order to help that engineer build mad sciences into his gadgets for only a single improvement allocation.

Sadly, for most engineers (but perhaps happily for the rest of us!), mad scientists often don't play well with others, so finding someone with this Stunt who is willing to collaborate is a great undertaking all by itself (and may even be a good seed for an adventure – Story Tellers, take note).

Sleight of Hand

(Skill, page 136)

Distractions

✧ Bump and Grab [Sleight of Hand]

Your character is exceptionally Skilled at taking advantage of distractions in order to make a quick grab. You may **spend a Fate point** to make a simple Sleight of Hand attempt to do something – pick a pocket, palm an object – as a free action.

✧ Cool Hand [Sleight of Hand]

A steady hand can be critical when things get hairy. This character's hands never shake and never waver.

Your character may ignore any difficulty increases from the environment when performing any fine manual work (even if that fine manual work doesn't involve the Sleight of Hand Skill, such as Burglary for lock picking, or Science for surgical work).

Further, his steadiness minimizes other distractions and cuts down on mistakes. Once per scene he may eliminate one single non-environmental penalty that affects his Sleight of Hand.

✧ Sucker Punch [Sleight of Hand]

If you are initiating an attack with someone who is not expecting it, you may use your Sleight of Hand Skill instead of your Fists Skill on the first exchange, provided you can directly interact with your target and narrate a reasonable distraction as your prelude.

Showmanship

✧ Juggler [Sleight of Hand]

You have a great talent for juggling; this includes the ability to throw around and catch seemingly dangerous objects (knives, torches) without any fear of harm to yourself.

If called on to make a Skill roll for juggling, you gain a +2 on your roll. You may set this +2 bonus aside and instead use your Sleight of Hand Skill instead of Art to make a performance that dazzles your audience.

This ability does not include the ability to catch weapons that are thrown at you with the intent of harm – if you want that ability as well, you'll have to look to the Catch Stunt under Weapons (see page 198).

You may, however, use your Sleight of Hand Skill to complement your Weapons Skill whenever making a thrown weapon attack.

✧ Legerdemain [Sleight of Hand]

You have a knack for pulling off magic tricks and can draw the eye effortlessly. When performing a magic trick, you may use Sleight of Hand instead of Art to perform and entertain, getting a +1 bonus to your roll.

If you are covering up some other sort of activity at the same time, your effort to conceal receives a +1 as well.

✧ Stage Magic [Sleight of Hand]

Requires Legerdemain.

You can perform misdirection on a large scale, under appropriately controlled circumstances. Provided you are acting within an arena you control (such as a stage, or an area you have had adequate time to prepare), there are simply no size limitations (within reason) for your Sleight of Hand targets.

✧ Master of Illusion [Sleight of Hand]

Requires Stage Magic.

You can prepare for a large illusion in a very short period of time, using improvised props and rigging. This lets you bring the effects of Stage Magic into play very quickly; the time it takes to prepare is reduced by three steps, allowing the character to put together something in about a minute that would normally take half an hour of preparation.

Starship Engineering

(Skill, page 137)

In Action

✧ More Power! [Starship Engineering]

The engineer knows how to give a temporary boost of power to one shipboard system. Add one to a Skill check of any one system but reduce another Skill level by one for this turn.

✧ Cut the Limiters! [Starship Engineering]

Requires More Power!

There are various safeties in place to make sure the crew doesn't strain a Starship's sophisticated systems. The engineer knows how to bypass these and give an extra boost of power to any one system at the cost of reducing its power by one *for the rest of the scene*. Add one to any ship Skill check.

✧ We need it now! [Starship Engineering]

The character's talented at getting things repaired under time-critical circumstances. The time it takes to get something fixed by the character is reduced by two steps. If the situation is already operating on the fastest possible amount of time the difficulty of the repair effort is reduced by one. These bonuses stack with Grease Monkey (above)!

✧ Just Hit It [Starship Engineering]

Requires We need power now!

Sometimes a bunch of repairs can get short-handed with a good swift thump. A character must **spend a Fate point** to activate this ability, and roll Engineering. He then hits a device or other contraption that isn't working, and it starts working immediately, regardless of the difficulty rating to repair it under time pressure. It will continue work for a number of exchanges equal to the shifts gained on the Engineering roll (vs. a target of Mediocre). Once the time is up, the device stops working again, and any efforts to repair it are
at a one step higher difficulty (since, after all, you hit the thing). If the character wishes to thump again, he may do so for another Fate point, but the difficulty for the Engineering roll increases by one on each subsequent attempt.

In Drydock

✧ Space Monkey [Starship Engineering]

Requires one other Starship Engineering Stunt.

If it has an engine and flies in the air or space, you "get" it, intuitively and completely. Whenever dealing with a Engineering roll involving a air or space vehicle – repairing, designing, upgrading, etcetera – your difficulties are reduced by one, and additionally, the time to get the work done is reduced by one step on the time table (see page 237).

✧ Recycle [Starship Engineering]

Requires Space Monkey

If the engineer has access to the wreckage of another Starship they can salvage parts to help with repairs. This Stunt reduces the difficulty of repairs by one as long as the engineer has time to spend on salvaging parts from the wreckage.

✧ Jury Rig [Starship Engineering]

Requires Just Hit It

The engineer can **pay a Fate point** to put together a few spare parts, re-program the system and work magic to get one vital system (player's choice) working long enough to make it to a safe landing or docking point even when it should require a repair facility.

Starship Gunnery

(Skill, page 138)

Marksmanship

✧ She's in my sights [Starship Gunnery]

Taking slow and careful aim can be done as a manoeuvre, placing an Aspect on your target (such as "Gotcha!"). Whenever performing an aiming manoeuvre against a target, you may roll your Starship Gunnery at +1 to place the Aspect.

✧ Pinpoint Targeting [Starship Gunnery]

Requires She's in my sights

The gunner is expert at targeting specific ship systems. The gunner **pays a Fate point** and chooses a target system (such as FTL drive or Life Support). If a consequence is incurred as a result of this attack it must affect the system chosen by the gunner.

✧ Critical Hit [Starship Gunnery]

Requires Pinpoint Targeting

The gunner **pays a Fate point** and can place a tag on a known weakness of a target. This must have been established prior to the engagement. On a subsequent turn if the gunner or another friendly successfully target's that weakness using Pinpoint Targeting the attack will automatically inflict a consequence. Establishing the weakness of an enemy should be a difficult task using Advanced Sensor Suite, Academic Research or even a whole adventure in its own right.

Space Combat

✧ Snap Shot [Starship Gunnery]

Your character is quick at getting a shot off and may **spend a Fate point** to get your shot in first before all other ships.

✧ Barrage Fire! [Starship Gunnery]

Your character is Skilled at laying down a scathing hail of suppressive fire with the ships weapons. When using Gunnery to perform a block (see page 217), the character can ignore up to two points of penalties imposed by the Story Teller due to the complexity of the block.

✧ Volley Fire [Starship Gunnery]

Required Barrage Fire!

You can co-ordinate fire from the various ship weapons to act as a point defense where the ship does not have the system. It requires two or more ship weapon Skills and they may not be used to target anything else this turn. It can also be used to enhance existing Point Defense and allows the ship to add the Skills levels of all weapons of one type (projectile or beam) to the point defence attack.

✧ Expert Reloading [Starship Gunnery]

Normally, reloading your weapons is considered a part of the normal ebb and flow of combat and is usually handled automatically by the ships weapon systems. It doesn't become an issue until something happens to make it relevant. A lack of ammunition can show up one of two ways. First, "out of ammunition" can often show up as a minor consequence. The ship is still considered to have taken a minor consequence for purposes of determining whether the next consequence is major – the minor consequence simply won't be there.

Second, "out of ammunition" can show up as a temporary Aspect resulting from a manoeuvre such as Auto-Fire. With this Stunt, the character may **spend a Fate point** in order to remove this consequence or Aspect immediately, at the end of any exchange.

Starship Pilot

(Skill, page 139)

Clever Tricks

✧ Escape Artist

Can get you out from another's attack – but places you outside of the combat area and you can't attack in the next turn.

✧ Threading The Needle [Starship Pilot]

This pilot can squeeze his ship through places where it has no business fitting. Normally, a pilot can **spend a Fate point** for a coincidence or declaration to assure that the plane has enough clearance space to fly through. Characters with this Stunt never need to spend a Fate point: if it could fit, it can. What's more, if your character does **spend a Fate point**, he can fit the ship in places it absolutely should not be able to. This Stunt is also useful for landing ships in improbably tight quarters.

✧ Fighter Jock [Starship Pilot]

The character is a Skilled combat pilot, and may use his Starship Pilot Skill to attack in a dogfight instead of Starship Gunnery. Only applicable to pilots in starfighters, shuttles or light freighters (if armed).

✧ Fighter Ace [Starship Pilot]

Requires Fighter Jock.

The character's combat flight experience makes him a deadly force when he gets the upper hand. While in flight, if he is able to make an attack on another flying target from an elevated or rear position, he does two additional points of stress on a successful hit. Only applicable to pilots in starfighters, shuttles or light freighters (if armed).

This Stunt can't be used two exchanges in a row; whenever making such an attack, the acrobatics take him out of his position of advantage.

Getting Home

✧ Hold It Together

Spend a Fate point and this pilot can limp a ship with a serious consequence back to a nearby port.

✧ Expert Navigator [Starship Pilot]

The space lanes and hazzards are an open map in the character's mind. Unless bizarre circumstances are afoot, he can never get lost and can plot a jump in a hurry if required. If something strange is happening then his Starship Pilot Skill rolls are never reduced by more than 2.

✧ Crash Test Pilot [Starship Pilot]

Requires at least two other Pilot Stunts.

The character has a great instinct for crash-landing Starships, and is able to walk away from even the most catastrophic-seeming landings. While the character is piloting a ship into its crash landing, he and his passengers get the benefits of the Death Defiance Stunt (see page 160), and are all considered "out of sight" when the plane crashes.

Ships

✧ Personal Ship [Starship Pilot]

Requires at least three other Starship Pilot Stunts

You have a small personal ship such as a starfighter, light freighter or shuttle that you own or have the exclusive right to fly. In all respects, this Stunt functions like the Custom Ride Stunt (page 156). Refer to that Stunt for details.

✧ Prototype Ship [Starship Pilot]

Requires Personal Ship.

Identical to the Prototype Vehicle Stunt (on page 156), but for your ship.

✧ Ship Mechanic [Starship Pilot]

Requires at least two other Starship Pilot Stunts.

Your character may not understand the broader Aspects of Starship Engineering but when it comes

to ships, he knows them inside and out. Whenever working on a ship, you may use your Pilot Skill instead of Starship Engineering.

Starship Systems

(Skill, page 140)

Duties

✧ Science Officer [Starship Systems]

The character has specialised in Electronic Warfare Suites and Advanced Sensors and can temporarily boost the Skill level and range (sensors only) of either system by one level, once per scene but only for one turn.

✧ Medical Officer [Starship Systems]

The character can use their Starship Systems Skill in place of the Science Skill for the purpose of performing medical tasks.

Technologies

✧ Shields [Starship Systems]

The character has specialised in managing energy shields on Starships and can temporarily boost the power of the system by one, once per scene, but only for one turn.

✧ Tractor Beam [Starship Systems]

The character has specialised in Tractor Beams and Grappling systems and can temporarily boost the Skill level of the system by one, once per scene, but only for one turn.

✧ Communications [Starship Systems]

The character has specialised in Communications systems and can temporarily boost the Skill level and range of the system by one level, once per scene, but only for one turn.

✧ Sensors [Starship Systems]

The character has specialised in Sensor systems and can temporarily boost the Skill level and range of the system by one level, once per scene but only for one turn.

✧ Mining/Salvage [Starship Systems]

The character has specialised in Mining and Salvage systems and can temporarily boost the Skill level of either system by one level, once per scene but only for one turn.

✧ Teleport [Starship Systems]

The character has specialised in Teleport systems and can temporarily boost the Skill level of the system by one level, once per scene but only for one turn.

✧ Flight Deck [Starship Systems]

The character has specialised in Flight Deck operations and can temporarily boost the Skill level of the system by one level, once per scene but only for one turn. This could cover launching more fighters, recovering them quicker, assisting with repairs.

✧ Divert Power [Starship Systems]

Requires one other Starship Systems Stunt

The character can reduce one ship system Skill by one (not including weapons or drives) to raise another ship system Skill by one for this turn.

Stealth

(Skill, page 141)

Hide

✧ In Plain Sight [Stealth]

Your character suffers no environment-based difficulty increases when using Stealth. This means that even when he's out in the open and wouldn't normally be able to justify using Stealth, he may. This also means that, once hidden, even people actively searching for him (page 142) do not get a +2 to their Alertness or Investigation rolls.

This ability only functions so long as your character does not move, and does not do anything other than hide. The moment he does something else, he breaks cover and is immediately visible.

✧ Master of Shadows [Stealth]

Requires In Plain Sight.

Your character is one with the shadows, and lives in every darkened corner, unheard and unseen. You gain the full benefit of In Plain Sight, but may also move one zone per exchange without automatically breaking stealth, allowing you to remain hidden while moving, even when you shouldn't be able to hide in the first place.

If your character is in an environment that could give a bonus to stealth (like one with a Dark or

Smokey Aspect) or even one that would normally justify the use of Stealth to hide, you may **pay a Fate point** to make a full sprint action without automatically breaking stealth.

The upshot of this Stunt is as follows: Whenever the character moves while hidden, discovery penalties (see page 141) may still apply, but are cut in half. Outside of conflict, this leaves observers at +1 for a cautious creep, +2 for walking pace, +3 for a jog (short sprint) and +4 for an out-andout run (long sprint); inside conflict, observers only get a +1 to detect the character for every zone moved in an exchange. If used in combination with Like the Wind (see page 196), these discovery bonuses are eliminated entirely.

✧ Shadowed Strike [Stealth]

Requires Master of Shadows (above) and Vanish (below).

The character strikes from out of the darkness, leaving his foes bewildered and in pain. When hidden, the character can launch an attack while remaining hidden, using his Stealth for any defense rolls for the duration of that exchange.

✧ Deadly Shadows [Stealth]

Requires Shadowed Strike.

When using the Shadowed Strike method the character may use his Stealth to make attacks as well, rather than using his Weapons Skill or the like.

Retreat

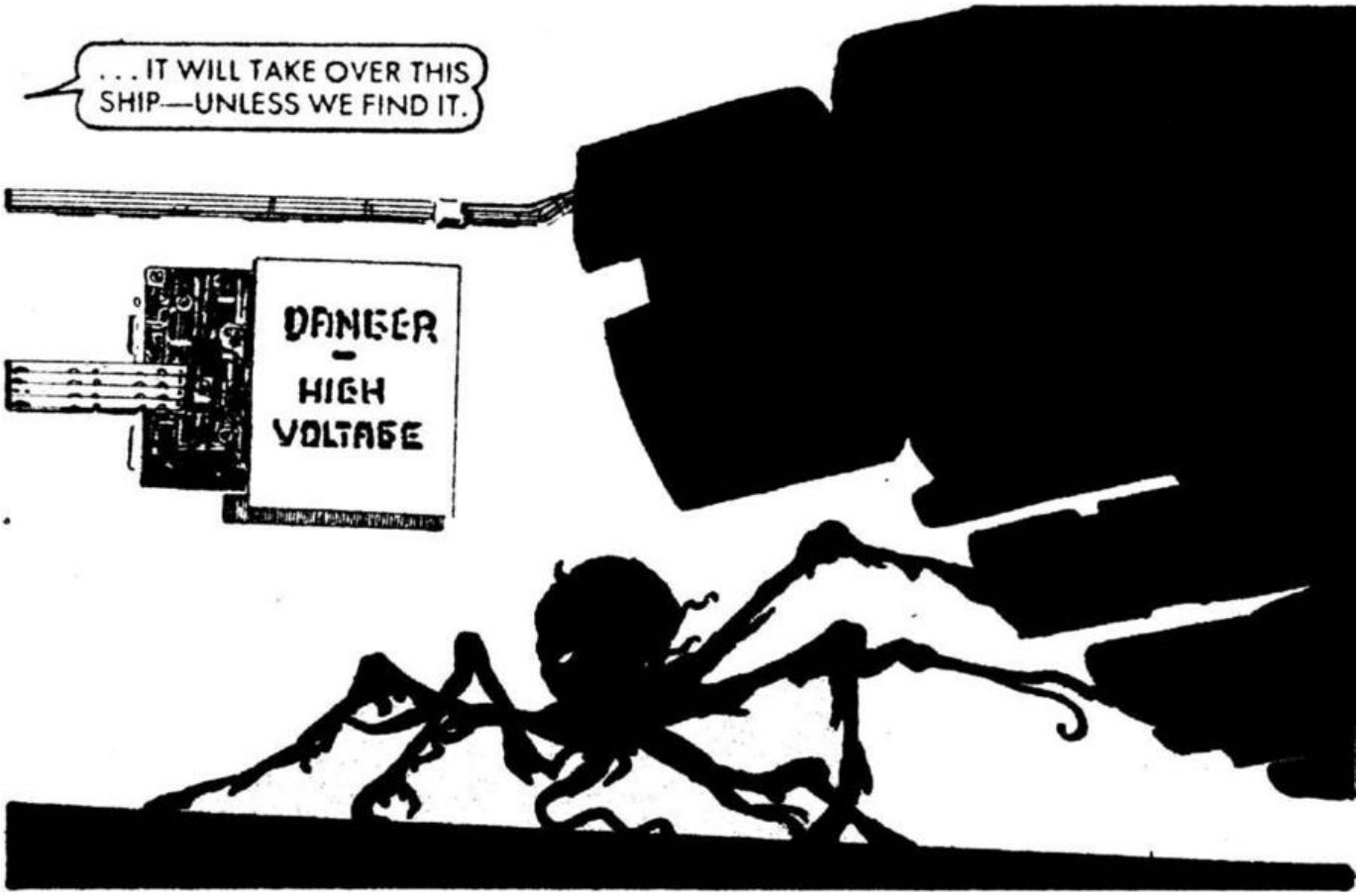
✧ Quick Exit [Stealth]

A momentary distraction is all you need to vanish from the scene. Provided you are not in the midst of a conflict, you may roll a quick contest between your Stealth and the highest Alertness in the room. If you succeed, the next time someone turns to look at or talk to you, you're not there.

✧ Vanish [Stealth]

Requires Quick Exit.

This Stunt functions the same as Quick Exit (above), but the character may vanish even if he is in a conflict, as a full action. This requires some dramatic flourish (smoke bombs or bright flashes are classics) or the invocation of an appropriate environmental Aspect (like The Darkness of the New Moon).



Skulk

✧ Hush [Stealth]

Your talent with stealth may be extended to others who are with you close by, provided that you travel as a group. As long as the whole group stays with you and follows your hushed orders, you may make a single Stealth roll for the whole group, using your Skill alone. If someone breaks from the group, they immediately lose this benefit, and may risk revealing the rest of you if they don't manage to pull off a little Stealth of their own.

You cannot apply the benefits of other Stunts (besides Hush) to this roll, though you may bring in your own Aspects (and possibly tag the Aspects of those you are concealing) in order to improve the result. The maximum number of additional people in the group is equal to the numeric value of the character's Stealth score (so someone with Fair Stealth and this Stunt would be able to use his Skill for himself and two others).

✧ Lightfoot [Stealth]

It's difficult to track you when you take care to walk lightly. Traps and such that depend on pressure or some other weight-based trigger are two steps easier for you to circumvent, and any attempts (such as with Investigation or Survival) to trace the physical evidence of your steps face a difficulty two higher than you rolled.

✧ Like the Wind [Stealth]

Requires Lightfoot.

Whenever your character moves under cover of Stealth – the skulking trapping for the Skill (see page 142) – the bonus to discovery efforts is cut in half. This means that out of conflict, observers are only at +1 for a slow creep, +2 for walking pace, +3 for jogging, and +4 for a full-out run; in a conflict, observers are only at +1 per zone moved. If you combine this Stunt with the Master of Shadows Stunt (see page 194), then your movement, however swift, never offers a bonus to discovery efforts, ever.

GLAVE WENT TO ABRAXAS, THE THIRD PLANET IN THE CENTAURI SYSTEM. IT WAS LIKE A PRIMITIVE EARTH.
THIS ARMONOCEROUS IS THE ONLY 'FORM OF TRANSPORT AS SURFACE CRAFT ARE BANNED HERE.

Survival

(Skill, page 142)

Beasts

✧ Creature Companion [Survival]

Your character has cultivated a close companion from the animal kingdom. This companion is designed using the companion rules (see page 227), with a few changes and limitations.

Creature companions are designed using four advances and can come from any world. This companion operates only with a "physical" scope, and must spend at least two of its advances on "Skilled" or "Quality". Any "Skilled" advances must be taken from a short list: Athletics,

Fists, Might, Stealth, and Survival. You may take only one Skill outside of that list, within reason, as based on the animal type. A raccoon might have Sleight of Hand, representing its ability to perform fine manipulation; a lion might have Intimidation (this is unsubtle, and not considered a violation of the physical scope). If the animal is of an appropriate size, this creature may be ridden as a mount, at +1 to Survival.

If the companion is a mount, such as a horse, or a more exotic alien beast that has been persuaded to allow you to ride it, you may use that mount's Athletics Skill instead of Survival in order to ride it. Athletics would also be used to pour on the speed when the rider is too busy to "steer" the animal himself.

✧ Creature Friend [Survival]

Pick a particular type of animal (cats, alien walking plants, floating gas creatures or the like). Your character is capable of communicating with creatures of that type, and moreover, they are likely to be favorably inclined towards him, granting a +2 when interacting with the specified animal type. This doesn't connote a special level of intelligence on the part of the animal, so the communication may be relatively simple. When relevant, the character uses Animal Handling in lieu of any social Skill when dealing with these animals.

✧ Call of the Wild [Survival]

Requires Creature Friend.

Calling out in a "native" voice, your character is able to summon nearby friendly creatures. A number of creatures up to the amount of shifts generated by Survival roll (against Mediocre) will heed the call (x10 if the creatures are small, like rats or cats, x100 for vermin like roaches). Only creatures affected by the Creature Friend (above), or King of the Beasts (below) Stunts may respond.

✧ King of the Beasts [Survival]

Requires Creature Friend.

This Stunt functions as Creature Friend does, but the character may speak to an entire broad category of animals, rather than just one type.

For purposes of this ability there are three main categories – creatures from or from near the sea (fish, whales, seabirds), creatures from the land (dogs, primates, cats, birds) and vermin (bugs, rats and other small scuttling things).

There is loose overlap between these categories – pigeons are in all three – and the Story Teller is encouraged to be generous in her interpretation.

Orientation

✧ Due North [Survival]

Your character's natural talent for navigation is such that he rarely gets lost. He always knows which direction north is, flawlessly, even underground, without a compass or stars to guide him. He gets a +2 knowledge bonus whenever trying to find his way out of a place (using Survival), and faces no familiarity penalties to his efforts to navigate even in unknown locations.

✧ Tracker [Survival]

Your character is Skilled at tracking, and can infer a great deal of information from a trail. When studying tracks, the character may roll Survival.

Each shift from this roll spent thereafter gives the character one piece of information about the person or creature being tracked (such as weight, how they were moving, and so on). Normally, Survival can't be used to track something, leaving such attempts at a Mediocre default.

Riding

✧ Hands Free [Survival]

You can do all sorts of things from the back of your horse (or other mount). Riding your animal never causes a supplemental action penalty when you're doing something else from the saddle, whether you're rolling Survival as the primary Skill or using it to supplement another Skill.

✧ Hell Bent [Survival]

You know how to get the best speed out of your mount. Any sprint action you take using Survival while mounted is done at +2.

If you're using your mount's Athletics Skill instead (as with an Animal Companion mount, above), the +2 is applied to the mount's Athletics roll.

You must be an active participant in driving your mount forward in order to receive this bonus, in such a case. The benefit doesn't apply if you're, say, in the saddle, but unconscious.

✧ Ride Anything [Survival]

If it can be ridden like a riding beast, you can ride it. You suffer no penalties or increased difficulty for a lack of familiarity, no matter how strange the mount, be it dinosaur, mechanical spider-robot, or Alien bird of prey.

✧ Breaking it In [Survival]

You're Skilled at breaking in new mounts. Normally, breaking in a mount is a conflict between rider and steed. The rider is making social attacks (using Survival vs. Resolve) on the animal while the animal is making Athletics or Might vs. Survival physical attacks on the rider. When one party is finally taken out, takes a consequence, or concedes, either the animal is broken or the rider is thrown. Whatever the net result, the animal's composure track clears immediately.

Your character receives a +2 on all efforts to break in a new mount. If successful, he gets a +1 to all Survival rolls on a creature he has broken for the duration of that session.

Weapons

(Skill, page 143)

Proficiency

✧ Flawless Parry [Weapons]

When the character takes a full defense action using Weapons, he gains a +3 bonus rather than the usual +2.

✧ Riposte [Weapons]

Requires Flawless Parry.

Whenever you are physically attacked by an opponent at melee distance (the same zone as you), and you successfully defend yourself (using Weapons) well enough to gain spin, you may use that spin to inflict a single point of physical stress on your attacker, immediately, as a free action.

✧ Turnabout [Weapons]

Requires Riposte.

You have a singular ability to turn an opponent's action into an advantage for yourself.

Under the same conditions as Riposte, you may use your spin and **spend a Fate point** to treat your defense roll as a free-action attack, dealing physical stress equal to the shifts you got on your defense roll (since you got spin, you'll be inflicting at least three stress). You may only do this once per opponent in a scene.

✧ Zero G Combat

You are trained in using weapons in zero gravity situations. Trying to use a weapon in zero G without this training results in a -1 to the Weapons Skill. You also have a +1 to manoeuvre rolls in defence.

Thrown

✧ Catch [Weapons]

When defending against a thrown object, if you are successful enough to generate spin on your defense, you may declare that you are catching the item that was thrown at you, provided you have a free hand and it's something you could, practically speaking, catch (so no catching, say, refrigerators, unless you have something truly crazy going on in the Might department).

✧ Ricochet [Weapons]

You can throw a weapon such that it bounces off one or more surfaces, allowing it to come at an opponent from an unexpected direction. By bouncing your weapon off a surface before hitting, you make the shot more difficult, but also more likely to hit from an unexpected angle. Describe the shot and take a -1 penalty to the attack; if is the attack is successful, the stress of the hit is increased by 2.

In addition, you may use this Stunt to get a thrown weapon to hit a target that is around a corner, provided you can work out some way to see him (such as with a mirror).

✧ Good Arm [Weapons]

The character has an amazing throwing arm, and can throw weapons with great force, allowing them still to be effective at a much longer range than usual. The character may make an attack using a thrown weapon up to two zones away instead of the usual one; if he does so, the attack is made at a -1.

Weaponry

✧ Anything Goes [Weapons]

Your character suffers no complications for an awkward or improvised weapon – virtually anything

can be a lethal weapon in his hands, as long as he can comfortably and casually lift it.

The key here is that the weapon must be improvised – a chair, a priceless urn, a beer bottle. There's also a catch: most improvised weaponry doesn't often survive more than a few uses.

However, your character should never need to spend a Fate point in order to declare that an improvised weapon is close at hand, unless his surroundings have been deliberately prepared against this (such as a prison cell). When using the Weapons Skill to throw objects at a target, this Stunt means he often has an easy supply of ammunition at hand.

✧ Close at Hand [Weapons]

Close at Hand allows your character to bring his weapon to hand faster than the eye can track. He never takes a supplemental action penalty when drawing his weapon if he has it nearby or on his person. If someone is actively blocking such an action (see page 217), you may treat that block as if it had a value two steps lower.

Combined with Anything Goes (above), this character is effectively always effortlessly armed if he's in an even moderately cluttered environment.

✧ Weapon of Destiny [Weapons]

You may only take this Stunt if you have an Aspect that refers to the weapon by name.

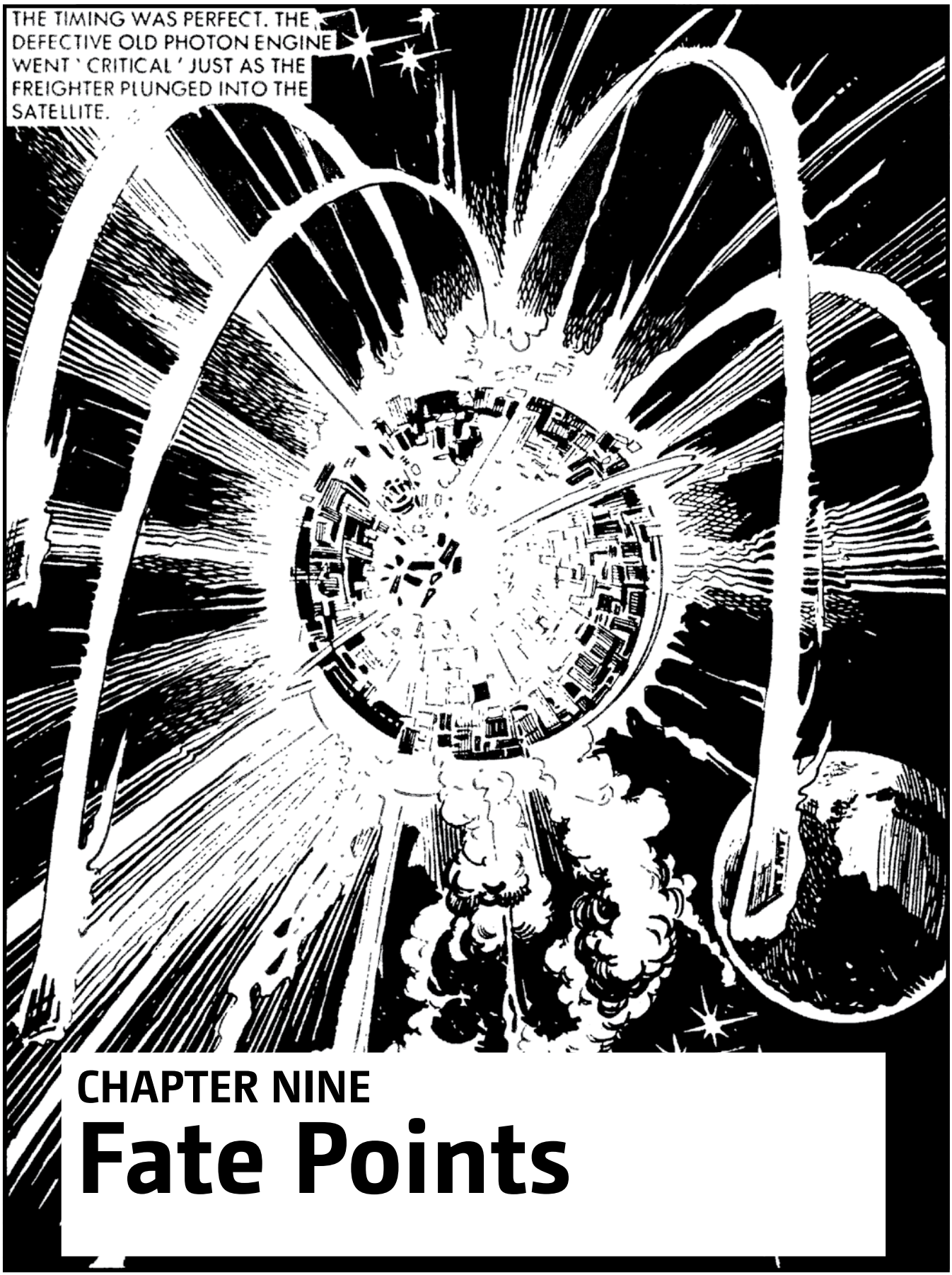
You have a signature weapon, which has a name that is well-known among certain circles, and a long and storied history surrounding its past owners. The weapon has a tendency to be always near at hand, even when circumstances have conspired against it. If you'd normally have to spend a Fate point to have this weapon nearby, you can have it nearby without having to spend a Fate point. If you wouldn't normally be able to get it near to you for a Fate point, then this Stunt lets you **spend a Fate point** even in the face of that *impossibility*. Once the Fate point is spent, the Story Teller is not required to furnish your weapon immediately, but must work to bend circumstances to make it available in reasonably short order. Thus, you cannot be deprived of the weapon for long unless you voluntarily give it up or pass it on to another.

Beyond the above capabilities, this weapon is an artefact (see page 83) that includes the craftsmanship improvement, giving you a +1 whenever you are using it. In addition, you may select one other improvement, including those only available to artefacts, such as Blessed, Arcane, Conscious, and others.

✧ Weapons of the Galaxy [Weapons]

Requires any three Weapon stunts

Every kind of proper (not improvised) hand-held melee weapon in the known galaxy has been in your hands at one point or another. Your experience is extensive and profound; you never face a familiarity penalty regardless of how strange the weapon you're using is. Further, if you tell a quick (two or three sentence) story about how you came to use such a weapon in times past, you may get a +1 bonus for a scene, once per "new" weapon, per session, at no cost. This story may either be out loud or as an internal monologue shared with the other players at the table.



CHAPTER NINE

Fate Points

Fate Points

Every player begins the first session of the game with a number of **Fate points (FP)** equal to ten, minus the number of Stunts they have. Fate points give players the ability to take a little bit of control over the game, either by giving their character bonuses when they feel they need them, or by taking over a small part of the story. Fate points are best represented by some non-edible token, such as glass beads or poker chips. (Previous experiments with peanuts have left players strapped for points!)

Characters may, at any point, spend a Fate point to gain a bonus, invoke an Aspect, tag an Aspect, make a declaration, or fuel a Stunt.

Gain a Bonus

A Fate point can be spent to add 1 to any roll of the dice, or improve any effort (such as an attack or defense) by 1. In practice, this is the least potent way to use a Fate point – you're usually much better off using one of the other applications, below. (Most players stop using this rule once they get comfortable using Aspects; you can, too.)

Invoke an Aspect

Aspects (see page 85) are those things that really describe a character and his place in the story. When you have an Aspect that's applicable to a situation, it can be invoked to grant a bonus. After you have rolled the dice, you may pick one of your Aspects and describe how it applies to this situation. If the Story Teller agrees that it's appropriate, you may spend a Fate point and do one of the following:

1. Reroll the dice, using the new result, or
2. Add two to the final die roll (after any rerolls have been done).

You may do this multiple times for a single situation as long as you have multiple Aspects that are applicable. You cannot use the same Aspect more than once on the same Skill use, though you may use the same Aspect on several different rolls throughout a scene, at the cost of one fate point per use.

Tag an Aspect

Scenes, other characters, locations, and other things of dramatic importance can have Aspects. Sometimes they're obvious, and sometimes they're less so. Players can spend a fate point to invoke an Aspect which is not on their own character sheet, if they know what the Aspect is. This is referred to as **tagging an Aspect**, and is covered in greater detail in the Aspects chapter, on page 85.

As a rule of thumb, tagging someone or something else's Aspects requires a little more justification than invoking one of your own Aspects. For scene Aspects, it should be some way to really bring in the visual or theme that the Aspect suggests. For Aspects on opponents, the player needs to know about the Aspect in the first place, and then play to it.

Power a Stunt

Some Stunts have particularly potent effects, and require spending a Fate point when used. If a Stunt requires a fate point to be spent, it will be made clear in the description. See the section on Stunts (page 145) for more.

Make a Minor Declaration

You may simply lay down a Fate point and declare something. If the Story Teller accepts it, it will be true. This gives the player the ability to direct small things in a story – usually something only the Story Teller can do.

Declarations can't be used to drastically change the plot or win a scene. Declaring "The alien drops dead of a heart attack" is not only likely to be rejected by the Story Teller, but it wouldn't even be that much fun to begin with. What this can be very useful for is convenient coincidences. Does your character need a power tool (but isn't in the engineering section)? Spend a Fate point and you find one in the equipment locker in the room you're in! Is there an interesting scene happening over there that your character might miss? Spend a Fate point to declare you arrive at a dramatically appropriate moment!

Your Story Teller has veto power over this use, but it has one dirty little secret. If you use it to do something to make the game cooler for everyone, the Story Teller will usually grant far more leeway than she will for something boring or, worse, selfish.

As a general rule, you'll get a lot more leniency from the Story Teller if you make a declaration that is in keeping with one or more of your Aspects. For example, the Story Teller will usually balk at letting a character spend a fate point to have a weapon after he's been searched. However, if you can point to your "Always Armed" Aspect, or describe how your "Strange Alien Beauty" Aspect kept the guard's

attention, the Story Teller is likely to give you more leeway. In a way, this is much like invoking an Aspect, but without a die roll.

Refreshing Fate Points

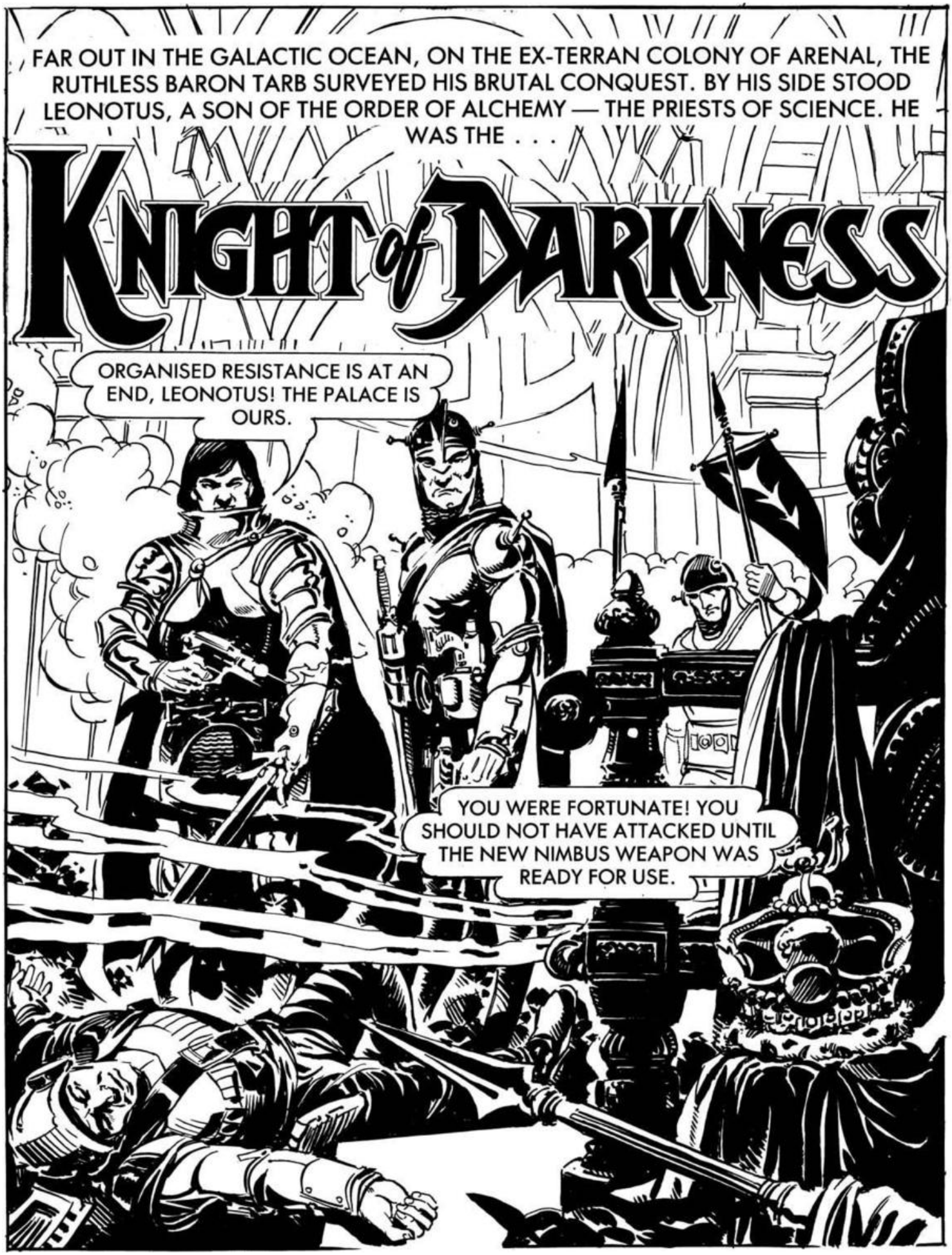
Players usually regain Fate points between sessions when a **refresh** occurs. If the Story Teller left things at a cliffhanger, she is entitled to say that no refresh has occurred between sessions. By the same token, if the Story Teller feels that a substantial (i.e., dramatically appropriate) amount of downtime and rest occurs in play, the Story Teller may allow a refresh to occur mid-session.

The amount of Fate points a player gets at a refresh is called his **refresh rate** and it is equal to ten less the the number of Stunts the player has. When a refresh occurs, players bring their number of Fate points **up to** their refresh rate. If they have more, their total does not change.

Earning New Fate Points

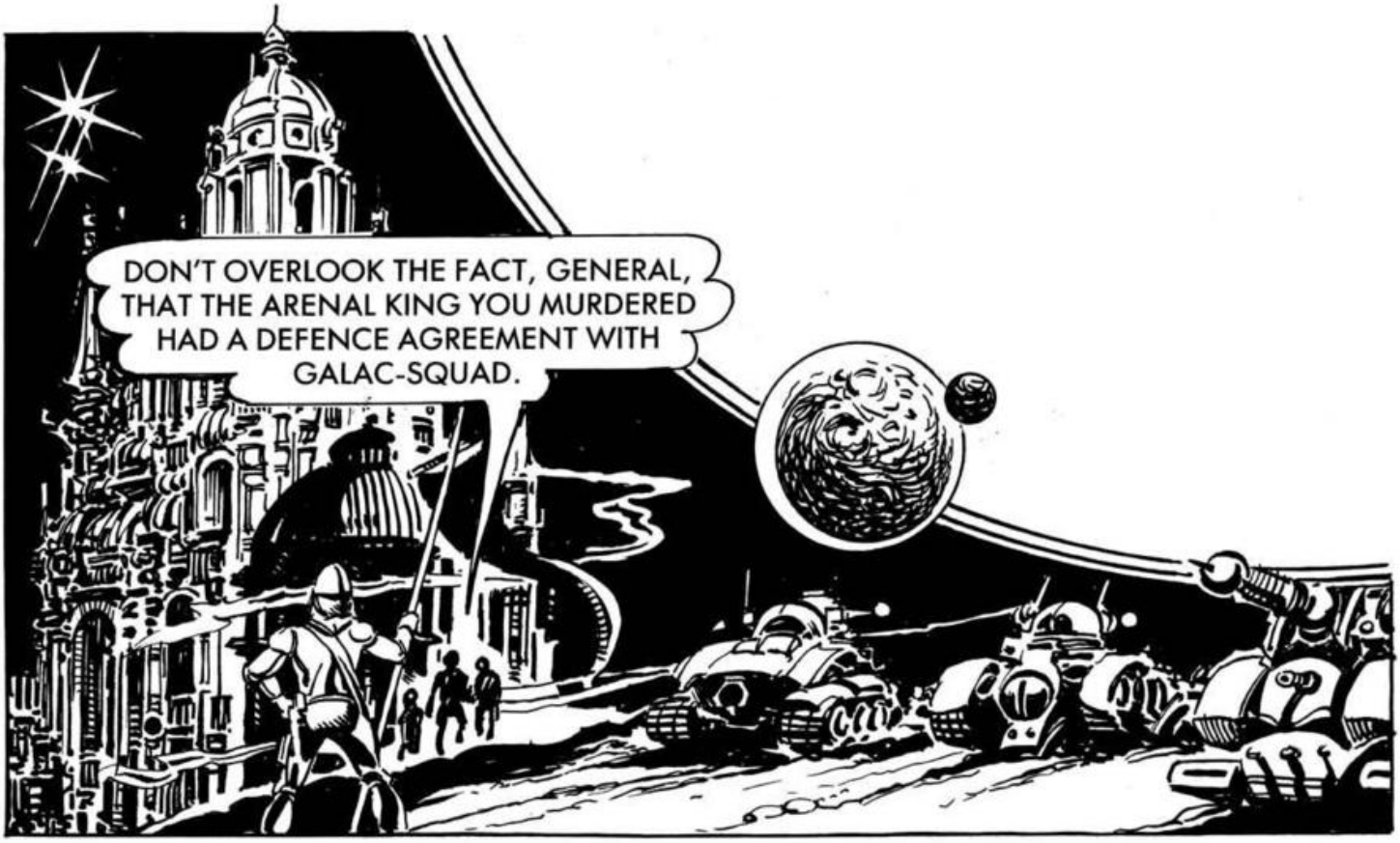
Players earn Fate points when their Aspects create problems for them. When this occurs, it's said that the Aspect **compels** the character. When the player ends up in a situation where his compelled Aspect suggests a problematic course of action, the Story Teller should offer the player a choice: He can *spend* a Fate point to ignore the Aspect, or he can act in accordance with the Aspect and *earn* a Fate point. Sometimes, the Story Teller may also simply award a Fate point to a player without explanation, indicating that an Aspect is going to complicate an upcoming situation. Players can refuse that point and spend one of their own to avoid the complication, but it's not a good idea, as that probably means the Story Teller will use things that *aren't* tied to you.

This isn't just the Story Teller's show; players can trigger compels as well, either by explicitly indicating that an Aspect may be complicating things, or by playing to their Aspects from the get-go and reminding the Story Teller after the fact that they already behaved as if compelled. The Story Teller isn't always obligated to agree that a compel is appropriate, but it's important that players participate here. See the Aspects chapter on page 85 for a more detailed treatment of compels.

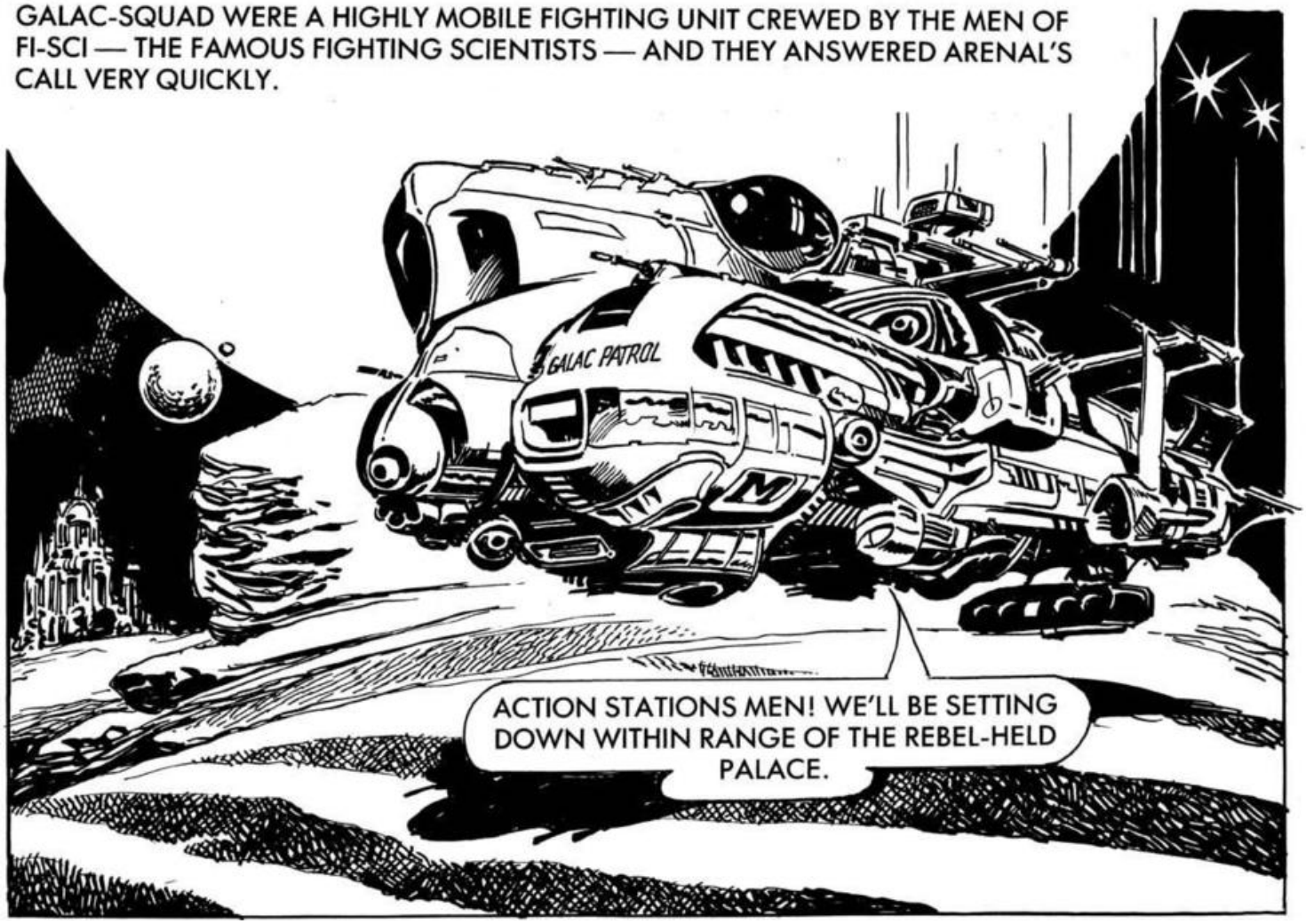

FAR OUT IN THE GALACTIC OCEAN, ON THE EX-TERRAN COLONY OF ARENAL, THE RUTHLESS BARON TARB SURVEYED HIS BRUTAL CONQUEST. BY HIS SIDE STOOD LEONOTUS, A SON OF THE ORDER OF ALCHEMY — THE PRIESTS OF SCIENCE. HE WAS THE . . .
KNIGHT of DARKNESS
ORGANISED RESISTANCE IS AT AN END, LEONOTUS! THE PALACE IS OURS.
YOU WERE FORTUNATE! YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE ATTACKED UNTIL THE NEW NIMBUS WEAPON WAS READY FOR USE.

I HAD NO NEED OF YOUR SO-CALLED WONDER-WEAPON, LEONOTUS. THE FACT THAT WE HAVE WON IS PROOF THAT WE WERE STRONG ENOUGH WITHOUT IT.
YOU FOUGHT WELL! NOW THAT POWER IS OURS, AND I AM IN CHARGE, OUR PLANET SHALL BECOME THE EQUAL TO OTHER FEDERATED TERRAN-PLANETS.

B



GALAC-SQUAD WERE A HIGHLY MOBILE FIGHTING UNIT CREWED BY THE MEN OF FI-SCI — THE FAMOUS FIGHTING SCIENTISTS — AND THEY ANSWERED ARENAL'S CALL VERY QUICKLY.



FROM THE PALACE, GENERAL TARB WATCHED THE GALAC-SQUAD CRAFT WITH APPREHENSION—
WE HAVE NOTHING CAPABLE OF PENETRATING THAT.

ON BOARD THE FI-SCI CRAFT WERE GENERAL PLUTO, AND ACE OPERATIVE, HADRON HALLEY.
SPOTTED ANYTHING, HADRON?
I THINK SO!

B

THE ELECTRO-SCAN HAS LOCATED A TARGET!

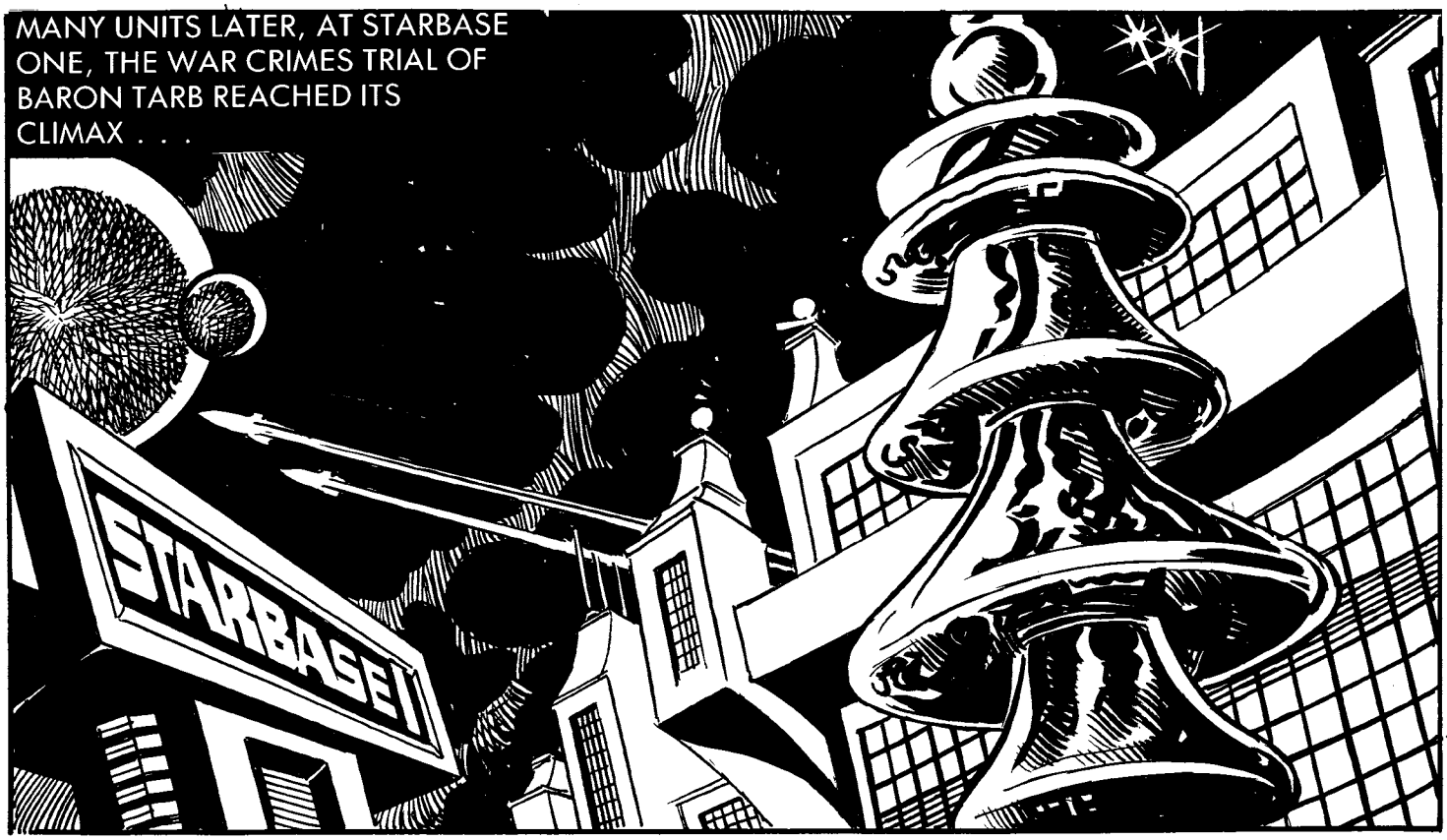
HADRON BEAMED DOWN TO THE OUTSKIRTS OF ARENAL'S CAPITAL, CANPASTIA.
MY RADAR-GUIDED THERMOWAVE IS FIXED ON THE TARGET. ALL I NEED IS AN UNINTERUPTED VIEW OF THE TARGET.

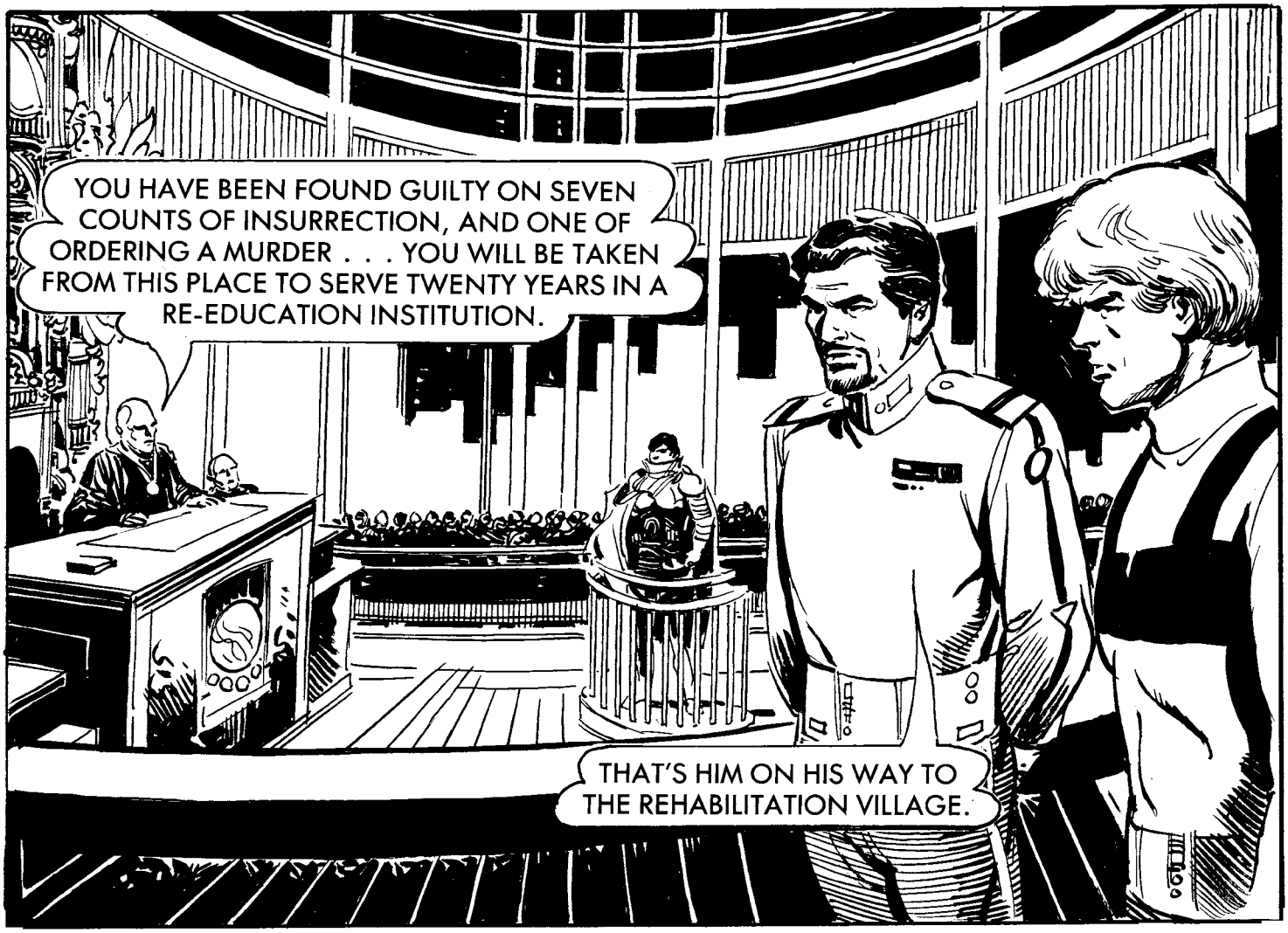
HADRON AIMED AT TARB'S COMPUTER.
THAT SHOULD DO IT! ELECTRONICS WILL DO THE REST.

B

THE BEAM PASSED THROUGH DEFENCES UNTIL IT REACHED THE PRE-SET TARGET AND FOCUSSED INTO A HIGH-ENERGY BEAM OF DESTRUCTION.
IN YOU GO LADS, THERE'S NOTHING TO GET IN YOUR WAY NOW.

WITHOUT SUPPORT FROM THE NOW INEFFECTIVE DEFENCE SYSTEMS, TARB'S MEN COULD ONLY MOUNT A TOKEN RESISTANCE TO THE GALAC-SQUAD TROOPERS.
TARB KNEW WHEN RESISTANCE WAS USELESS.
THAT NEW CIRRUS-BEAM WORKED WELL. THERE'S A LARGER VERSION WHICH WILL SHORTLY BE FITTED AS STANDARD EQUIPMENT IN ALL THE SHIPS OF THE BATTLE-FLEET.
AH, MISTER TARB. . . . ALWAYS THE TROUBLEMAKER. YOU'LL BE INTERROGATED BACK AT STARBASE-ONE. EVENTUALLY YOU WILL BE TRIED.
THERE'S NO TRACE OF LEONOTUS. PITY, I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO MEET A SCIENTIST OF HIS REPUTE.


MANY UNITS LATER, AT STARBASE ONE, THE WAR CRIMES TRIAL OF BARON TARB REACHED ITS CLIMAX . . .
STARBASE 1


YOU HAVE BEEN FOUND GUILTY ON SEVEN COUNTS OF INSURRECTION, AND ONE OF ORDERING A MURDER . . . YOU WILL BE TAKEN FROM THIS PLACE TO SERVE TWENTY YEARS IN A RE-EDUCATION INSTITUTION.
THAT'S HIM ON HIS WAY TO THE REHABILITATION VILLAGE.

YOUR " HUMANE " JUSTICE WILL BE THE DEATH OF YOU . . . FORGET NOT.
GUARDS, REMOVE THE PRISONER!
A LAST DEFIANT GESTURE!
I'M NOT SO SURE! WE STILL HAVEN'T LOCATED LEONOTUS.

WITH ONE LEAP, CINNIBAR SUDDENLY REMINDED ME WHY I'D BROUGHT HER ON THIS CASE — THE HUNTERS OF BABLON HAD DEVELOPED TECHNIQUES FOR KILLING JUST ABOUT ANYTHING THAT MOVED.

CHAPTER TEN

How To Do Things

How to Do Things

Characters, Starships and star empires in your games are going to do a lot. This chapter discusses the concepts of how to do things from a character's point of view but they also apply to star empires, monsters and Starships. Starships, Star Monsters and Star Empires each have their own set of Skills and manoeuvres. You can find out more information on how Starships do things on page 341, star monsters on page 265 and star empires on page 281.

For most things they do, there's no real need for rules. Characters can stand, walk, talk, go shopping, and otherwise do normal things without needing to roll dice. They can even take actions that use their Skill, like driving to work, without worrying about the dice. The dice only come out when there is an interesting challenge with meaningful consequences.

On the simplest level, when a character rolls the dice, if he matches or exceeds the difficulty, he succeeds; if he doesn't, he fails. When the issue is simple, then this may be all that's necessary, but sometimes you also need to know how well a character did or did not do. Clearly, if a character rolls three higher than the target, that's better than rolling only one higher.

The result of the roll is called the **effort**. Each point that the effort beats the difficulty by is one **shift**. If a roll is below the target difficulty, it's a failure and it generates no shifts – there are no "negative" shifts (if you flip the perspective, the opposition could be said to generate shifts – but this is rarely relevant). If a roll matches the target difficulty, it is a success but generates no shifts. If it beats it by one, it generates one shift; if it beats it by two it generates two shifts, and so on. The number of shifts generated by a roll is used as a measure of many elements, and is referred to as the **effect**.

Using Shifts

Shifts may be spent to affect the outcome of a roll. Often, the Story Teller will implicitly spend shifts in accordance with the player's description of his character's actions. Sometimes, players may explicitly spend shifts as well. Basic uses for one shift include:

- **Reduce time required**: Move the time required by one shift along the time ladder.
- **Increase quality of outcome**: Improve the quality of the job by one step.
- **Increase subtlety**: Make the job harder to detect by one.

Exactly how shifts can be applied depends on the Skill, and is detailed in the write-ups of the individual Skills, beginning on page 98. Later in this chapter, we'll also talk about how to deal with an excess of shifts, using the concepts of overflow and spin (page 230).

Taking Action

Dice are used in one of three types of situations:

- **Simple Actions**: Where the character is rolling against a fixed difficulty.
- **Contests**: When two characters each roll, with high effort winning and generating shifts.
- **Conflicts**: When two or more characters act in direct opposition to one another, but where resolution is not as simple as a contest.

Simple Actions

Simple actions are rolled against a difficulty set by the Story Teller. They are used to see if a character can do something, and how well he can do it. The Story Teller describes the situation and the player chooses a Skill to apply to it, and rolls against a difficulty determined by the Story Teller (by default, Average +1). If the effort is equal to or greater than the difficulty, the character succeeds. Some sample simple actions include:

- Climbing a wall
- Looking up an obscure fact
- Searching a crime scene for fingerprints

Contests

Contests are very much like simple actions, except the action is in direct opposition to someone else and easily resolved one way or another. Rather than setting a difficulty, each party rolls the appropriate Skill, and the outcome is resolved as if the high roll had beaten a difficulty equal to the low roll. A tie means both succeed, but whether that means the outcome is a tie or if it calls for another roll depends on the situation. Some sample contests include:

- Trying to grab a dropped weapon first
- A race on foot
- A shouting match

Conflicts

Conflicts are what happen when two or more characters are in opposition in a fashion that cannot be quickly and cleanly resolved. A conflict is broken down into a number of **exchanges** where each party

makes an effort to try to achieve their goal, taking turns to act. Opponents who stand in their way may be called upon to roll a response. They will accumulate success in the form of **stress** on opponents. Eventually, opponents will accumulate enough stress, or suffer enough **consequences**, to be **taken out**; alternatively, opponents may preemptively offer a **concession**.

Conflicts are the most involved actions, and an entire scene may revolve around a conflict. Conflicts include:

- Any kind of fight scene
- A political debate
- A long, tense staredown
- Trying to talk your way past a guard as he tries to scare you off

The complexity of conflicts is such that they merit an entire section detailing how they are handled.

Running Conflicts

Once a conflict begins, follow this regular pattern.

1. Frame the scene
2. Establish initiative
3. Begin exchange
    a. Take actions
    b. Resolve actions
    c. Begin a new exchange

Framing the Scene

Over the course of a conflict, the elements in play in the scene can play a part in how the conflict unfolds. In framing the scene, the Story Teller declares if there are any Aspects on the scene, and lays them out for the players. (The use of scene Aspects is detailed on page 91.)

If the scene is taking place over a broad area, the Story Teller also describes the **zones** the scene will be occurring in. Each zone is a loosely defined area where characters may directly interact with anyone else within that zone (which is a nice way to say talk to or punch them). Who is in what zone affects things like whether or not characters can attack each other or if they'll need to throw things or use ranged weapons. At the outset, determining which zones characters start in should be reasonably intuitive, but if there is a question, the Story Teller can rule on where the character starts.

When looking for a quick rule of thumb, remember that people in the same zone can "touch" each other, people one zone apart can throw things at each other, and people two (and sometimes three) zones apart can shoot each other. Any one given scene should not involve more than a handful of zones. Considering that guns easily operate over three zones, sometimes a few more, a comfortable number would be around three to five zones – but don't feel like you're forced to cram in more zones than the area readily supports.

Establish Groups

Opposing individuals may all be detailed characters like the player's characters, but often minions, mooks, or other faceless supporters will supplement the opposing force.

These supporters are collectively called "minons" and are handled slightly differently than other characters (page 226). Minions divide themselves into a number of groups equal to the number of opposing characters.

If a side is composed of a mix of characters and minions, characters may "attach" themselves to a group of minions, directing it and taking advantage of its assistance.

Dealing with large groups is a potentially complex exercise for the Story Teller. We have several recommendations and strategies for making this a lot easier, later in this chapter (page 226).

Establish Initiative

The order of characters' actions is determined at the beginning of the conflict, with characters acting from highest to lowest Alertness Skill (for physical conflicts) or Empathy (for social conflicts). This is referred to as the order of **initiative** (i.e., "who takes the initiative to go when").

Ties in initiative are resolved in favor of characters with a higher Resolve. Any remaining ties are in favor of the player closest to the Story Teller's right.

When a character is attached to a group of minions, use the character's initiative. Otherwise the group of minions has initiative as indicated by the quality of the group (as determined in "Minions", page 226).

Once that order is established, that is the order in which actions are taken for the duration of the exchange.

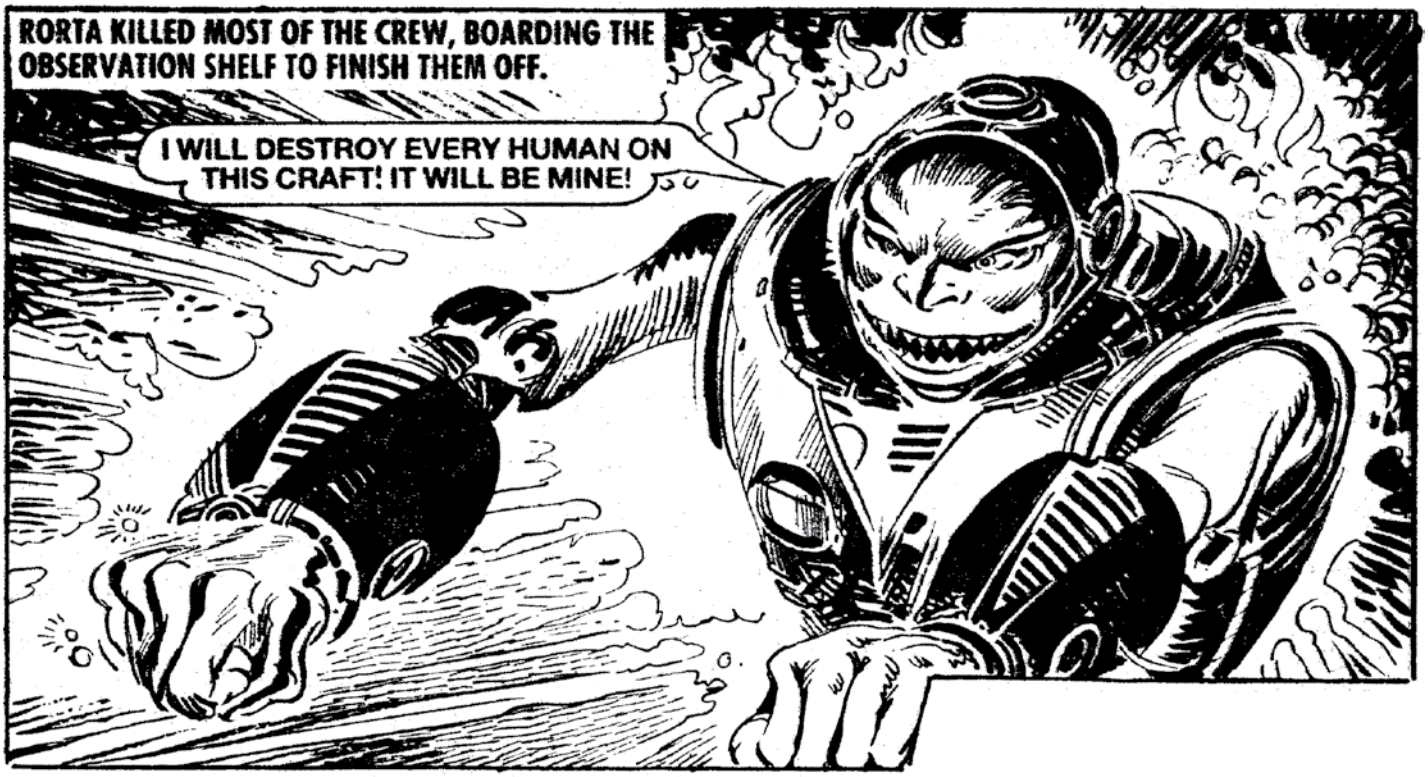
When the last person has gone, the exchange ends, and a new exchange begins with the first character acting again, and everyone else acting in the same order.

An Alternative to Skills

For some play-groups the idea of using particular Skills to determine initiative may seem "unbalancing", or at least unpleasant, in that it tends to force certain Skills to prominence in many a Skill pyramid. Also, some Story Teller's don't like having to keep track of a detailed order of actions. If your group doesn't like Skill-based initiative, use this alternative method instead:

- At the beginning of each exchange, the option to go first moves one player clockwise around the table.
- Initiative for that exchange proceeds clockwise (and includes the Story Teller and the Extras or named charactes they are controlling).
- Thus, the person who went first on the prior exchange goes last on the next one, and the others get their turn one step sooner.

This simple method makes sure that everyone gets a chance to go first over the course of a game, and doesn't require the players to make any sorts of special initiative-based decisions in their Skill selections.


RORTA KILLED MOST OF THE CREW, BOARDING THE OBSERVATION SHELF TO FINISH THEM OFF.
I WILL DESTROY EVERY HUMAN ON THIS CRAFT! IT WILL BE MINE!

Taking Action

When a player takes action, he describes what his character is doing and, if necessary, rolls an appropriate Skill. Each action is resolved as either a simple action (if there is no opposition), or as a contest, with the details depending upon the specifics of the action.

Most actions in a fight will be either attacks or manoeuvres.

Attacks

An **attack** is an attempt to force the attacker's agenda on a target, by attempting to injure them, by bullying them, or by some other means. An attack is rolled as a contest, with the attacking character (the **attacker**) attempting to beat the defending character (the **defender**) in a roll of Skills.

Not all attacks are necessarily violent. An attempt to persuade or distract someone is also a sort of attack. When determining whether or not the attack rules apply, simply look for two characters in conflict, an agenda (or "want") pushed by the acting character, and the target or obstacle to that agenda, the defending (or "responding") character. The Skills used to attack and defend depend on the nature of the attacker's agenda. Here are some examples.

The attacker wants to...	So he uses...	And the defender can use...
Wound or kill	Fists, Guns, Weapons	Fists, Athletics, Weapons
Deceive	Deceit	Resolve, Empathy
Scare	Intimidation	Resolve
Charm	Rapport	Resolve, Deceit
Force movement	Might	Might

If the attacker wins the roll, his shifts may be spent to inflict stress on the defender (see "Resolving Attacks", page 219). If the defender wins, the attack fails; if the defender wins significantly, he may even earn spin (see "Spin", page 230), which he can use to his advantage.

Manoeuvres

A **manoeuvre** is an attempt to change the situation in some way, affecting the environment or other people, but without damaging or forcing the target (if force is used or damage is dealt, it would be an attack). When a character tries to jump to grab a rope, throw

dust in an enemy's eyes, draw eyes upon himself in a ballroom, or take a debate down a tangential path – that's a manoeuvre.

A manoeuvre is either a simple action or a contest, with the difficulty or opposition determined by the nature of the manoeuvre. A manoeuvre that doesn't target an opponent is resolved as a simple action. Most simple manoeuvres like this result in a character rolling against a Story Teller-set difficulty and doing something with the resulting shifts. A manoeuvre can also target an opponent, and, if successful, place a temporary Aspect on him. Either kind can also be used to place a temporary Aspect upon a *scene*. See the "Resolving Manoeuvres" section later in this chapter (page 223) for details.

Special Actions

Free Actions

Some kinds of actions are "free" – they don't count as the character's action during an exchange, regardless of whether or not a roll of the dice is involved. Rolling for defense against an attack is a free action. So are minor actions like casting a quick glance at a doorway, flipping a switch right next to the character, or shouting a short warning.

There is no limit on the number of free actions a character may take during an exchange; the Story Teller simply has to agree that each action is free, and should feel free to impose limits if it seems like someone is taking excessive advantage of this rule.

Full Defense

A character can opt to do nothing but protect himself for an exchange. By foregoing his normal action, he gains a +2 on all reactions and defenses for that exchange. Characters who are defending may declare it at the beginning of the exchange rather than waiting for their turn to come around. Similarly, if they have not acted in the exchange at the time when they are first attacked, they may declare a full defense at that point, again foregoing their normal action for the exchange.

Hold Your Action

A character can opt not to act when his turn comes around. When a character takes a hold action, he has the option of taking his turn any time later in the exchange. He must explicitly take his turn after someone else has finished their turn and before the next person begins. He cannot wait until someone declares what they're trying to do, then interrupt them by taking his turn.

Block Actions

When the character's action is preventative – trying to keep something from happening, rather than taking direct action to make something happen – he is performing a block action. He declares what he's trying to prevent and what Skill he's using to do it.

Players may declare a block against any sort of action or actions and may theoretically use any Skill, but unless the block is simple and clear, the Story Teller may assess penalties based upon how hard it would be, or how much of a stretch it would be. Players should never be able to "cover all bases" with a single block.

A blocking character can declare that he is protecting another character. He makes this declaration on his turn, and rolls the Skill he's using to block; the result is the **block strength**.

When, later that exchange, any enemy tries to attack the protected character, the protected character gets the benefit of both the blocker's defense as well as his own, whichever is better. The attacker rolls his attack as normal. The defender rolls his defense as normal. If that defense roll is higher than the block strength, he uses the defense result; otherwise he uses the block strength. The attacker then generates shifts as normal.

For other types of blocks, the blocking character declares the block on his turn, and rolls the Skill he's using to block, subject to any penalties imposed by the Story Teller. The result is the block strength. Later that exchange, every time another character tries to perform the blocked action, he enters into a contest with the blocker. The character trying to get past the block rolls the Skill he's using for the action (not a Skill specifically appropriate to the block), and compares it to the block strength. If the attacker gets at least one shift, he successfully overcomes the block.

Trying to get past a block always takes an action, though the Story Teller may grant similar latitude in deciding what Skill is being used to get past it. Even if the action is *normally* "free", getting past the block takes additional effort, and thus the Story Teller can declare that it takes up the player's action for the exchange.

A variety of Skills may be appropriate to getting past a block. Getting past a block may occasionally require rolling a Skill modified by another, secondary Skill, as demonstrated in this next example.

Supplemental Actions

Sometimes a character needs to do something more complicated than just taking a single, basic action. Sometimes the complication is simple, like drawing a weapon and attacking; sometimes it's more complex, like composing a sonnet while fencing.

When the character performs a simple action while doing something else, like drawing a weapon and attacking, or firing off a signal flare while intimidating the snapping wolves at the edge of the firelight, it is a **supplemental action**, and simply imposes a -1 on the character's primary action roll (effectively spending one shift of effect in advance). When in doubt about which is the primary action and which is the supplemental one, the supplemental action is the one which would normally require no die roll.

Sometimes the Story Teller may decide a supplemental action is particularly complicated or difficult, and may increase the penalty appropriately.

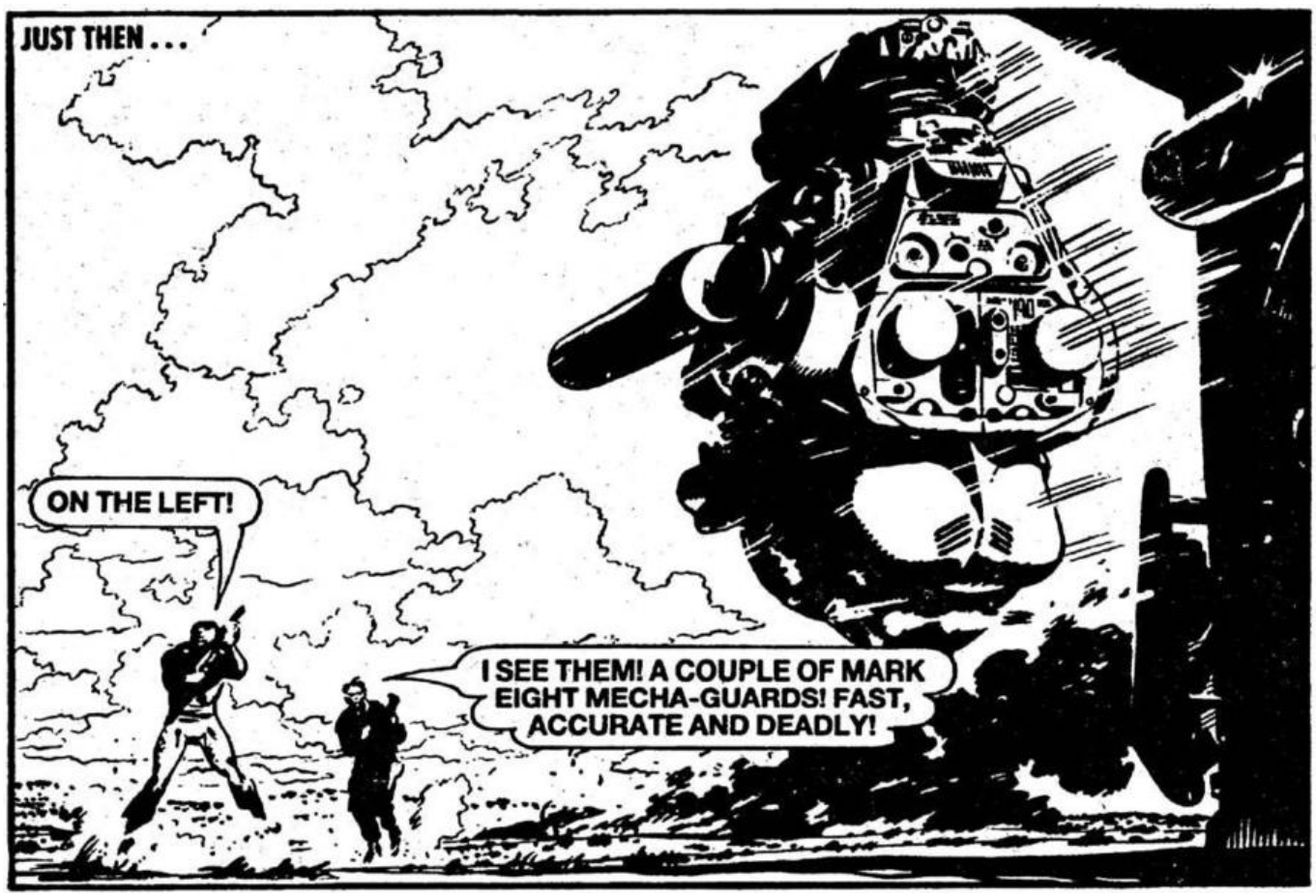
Movement

Movement is one of the most common supplemental actions. When it is reasonably easy to move from one zone to the next, characters may move one zone as a supplemental action (see "Framing the Scene", above, for an explanation of zones). If they wish to move further than that, they must perform a primary (not supplemental) **sprint** action, which entails rolling Athletics and allowing the character to move a number of zones equal to the shifts generated.

Sometimes, it is more difficult to move from one zone to the next, such as when there is some sort of barrier (like a fence or some debris) or there is some other difficulty (like getting from a rooftop to the street below and vice versa). This movement complication is called a **border**. The numeric value of that border increases the penalty for a move action and subtracts shifts from a sprint action.

Combining Skills

Sometimes the character needs to perform a task that really requires using two or more Skills at once. You never know when a character is going to need to throw a knife (Weapons) while balancing on a



spinning log (Athletics) or when he's going to need to explain germ theory (Science) to one of the Dead Gods (Resolve).

In those situations, the Story Tellers calls for a roll based on the main Skill being used (the primary thrust of the action), but **modified** by a second Skill. If the second Skill is of greater value than the first, it grants a +1 bonus to the roll; if the second Skill is of a lesser value, it applies a -1 penalty to the roll.

When the second Skill can only help the first, which is to say it can only provide a bonus, it **complements** the Skill. A complementing Skill never applies a -1, even if it's lower than the primary Skill. This usually happens when the character has the option of using the secondary Skill, but doesn't have to bring it to bear.

If the secondary Skill comes into play only to hold the primary Skill back, it **restricts** the Skill, meaning it can only provide a penalty or nothing at all. A restricting Skill never applies a +1, even if it's higher than the primary Skill. Often Skills like Endurance or Resolve are restrictive Skills – as you get more tired, you won't get better, but if you're resolute, you may not get worse.

In very rare circumstances, a primary Skill may be affected by more than one secondary Skill – say, a situation where a character needs to climb a wall (Athletics as primary), but is tired (Endurance restricts), but the wall's part of a building the character has been studying in order to burglarize (Burglary complements). In such cases, no matter the number of Skills in play, the most the combination can produce is one +1 and one -1. This is actually very quick to reason out. First, look at all of the Skills that modify or complement; if any of them are higher than the primary Skill, a +1 is applied. Next, look at all of the Skills that modify or restrict; if any of them are lower than the primary Skill, a -1 is applied. This may mean that multiple Skills all affecting a roll will result in no modification at all – both a +1 and a -1!

It's important to note that combining Skills can never be done to perform two full actions at once – if that's the goal, it should take two exchanges. When Skills are used in combination, one Skill is almost always going to serve a passive role, as the thing the character needs to be able to do in order to be able to perform the other Skill. If a character is trying to throw a knife while balancing on a spinning log, Weapons is the main Skill rolled, but Athletics restricts the roll, because without it, the character falls off the log, and his throw is moot. Similarly, if the character is gibbering before an ancient horror, his knowledge is simply not going to help him.

The difference between an action that combines Skills, and a supplemental action, is not always obvious. In general, if both components of the action are something you'd expect to roll for if they were done separately, then it's time to combine Skills. If the lesser part of the action is something that normally doesn't require a roll, just handle it as a supplemental action. Sometimes, an action will be both supplemental and modified – maybe the character is moving a little (supplemental), but is using his Athletics Skill to get an edge (modifying the primary roll):

Long Conflicts

When a character is in a position to control the pacing of a conflict (which generally requires the conflict be one on one, or ritualized in some way), he may stretch it out and try to wear down his opponent. When this happens, actions in a conflict start using the character's Endurance Skill to restrict (see this page) the Skill used on any of his actions. Similarly, actions may be restricted by Alertness if the conflict starts having too many distractions, or restricted by Resolve if the conflict has become mentally fatiguing.

Resolving Attacks

A successful attack inflicts an amount of stress on its target equal to the number of shifts on the attack (the difference between the attacker's effort, and the defender's effort) plus any weapon stress bonus. Stress represents non-specific difficulties a character can encounter in a conflict.

In a fight, it's bruising, minor cuts, fatigue, and the like. In a social conflict, it's getting flustered, embarrassed or loosing control of situation. In a mental conflict, stress might mean losing focus or running in circles.

Stress can usually be shaken off once a character has some time to gather himself, between scenes.

The type of stress that a character takes in a conflict should be appropriate to the type of conflict. Every character has two stress tracks. The first is the **Health stress track**, used for physical stress, such as wounds and fatigue. The second is the **Composure stress track**, representing the ability to "keep it together" in the face of social and mental injuries.

A character can only take so much stress before being unable to go on, represented by a stress track filling up. Each stress track defaults to 5 boxes, but the tracks can be increased by certain Skills: Endurance can increase the Health stress track, and Resolve can increase the Composure stress track. See the Skill descriptions of Endurance and Resolve on page 116 and page 131 for more details.

When stress is determined, the character should mark off that many boxes on the appropriate stress track. For instance, if the character takes a three-point physical hit, he should mark off the three boxes on the Health stress track.

When you exceed your stress boxes, you're taken out. Period. The only way to avoid this is to take consequences, to reduce the amount of stress you take from a particular blow (see below for more).

At the end of a scene, unless the Story Teller says otherwise, a character's stress tracks clear out; minor scrapes and bruises, trivial gaffes and embarrassments, and momentary fears pass away. The deeper issues resulting from attacks in the form of consequences (below) may last beyond the end of the scene.

Consequences

Stress is a transitory thing, but sometimes conflicts will have lasting consequences – injuries, embarrassments, phobias and the like. These are collectively called **consequences**, and they are a special kind of Aspect. We'll talk more about what this means shortly.

Consequences reduce the amount of stress you take from a particular blow but in turn can be tagged like Aspects and can have lasting effects. Each character gets one minor, one major, one severe, and one extreme consequence that they may take. Whenever the character is hit for stress, he or she may use up one or more of these consequence "slots" to reduce the hit, describing each consequence as a particular kind of wound or setback that's not easy just to shake off.

A **Minor** consequence reduces the hit by 2 stress
A **Major** consequence reduces the hit by 4 stress
A **Severe** consequence reduces the hit by 6 stress
An **Extreme** consequence reduces the hit by 8 stress

The exact nature of the consequence should depend upon the conflict – an injury might be appropriate for a physical struggle, an emotional state might be apt for a social one. Whatever the consequence, it is written down under the stress track. Unlike the temporary Aspects resulting from manoeuvres, consequences tend to hang around for a while and take time to fade. (To understand exactly what this means, see "Removing Consequences", page 223.)

For example...

Brandon Carter just took a hit from an alien marine storming his ship. He's got 2 stress boxes of his 5 marked off already and a Minor consequence, a graze from an explosion last round. The alien's attack caused a total of 3 stress to Brandon which would force a Taken Out result on him unless he takes a consequence. As he already has a Minor consqeuence Brandon decides to take a Major consequence, a nasty blaster burn. Even though a Major consequence can absorb up to 4 stress it will only absorb the 3 stress from the alien's attack.

Normally, the person taking the consequence gets to describe what it is, so long as it's compatible with the nature of the attack that inflicted the harm. The Story Teller acts as an arbitrator on the appropriateness of a consequence, so there may be some back and forth conversation before a consequence is settled on. The Story Teller is the final authority on whether a player's suggested consequence is reasonable for the circumstances and severity.

Characters may only carry three consequences at a time (barring certain Stunts which allow more). If the character already has three of his consequence slots filled in, regardless of severity, then the only remaining option is to be **taken out**. We'll talk about that next.

But here's the thing about consequences being a special kind of Aspect: As long as the consequences are on the character's sheet, *they may be compelled or tagged (or invoked!) like any other Aspect.* This also means that opponents may start tagging those Aspects pretty easily, since it's no secret that the consequence Aspects are now on the character's sheet! Not to mention, as per the free Tag

rule (page 92), the first Tag on each consequence is free in the scene where the consequence is inflicted.

Taken Out

If a character takes a hit which takes him past an extreme consequence, that character is **taken out**. The character has decisively lost the conflict, and unlike the other levels of consequence, his Fate is in the hands of his opponent, who may decide how the character loses. The outcome must remain within the realm of reason – very few people truly die from shame, so having someone die as a result of a duel of wits is unlikely, but having them embarrass themselves and flee in disgrace is not unreasonable.

The option to determine how a character loses is a very powerful ability, but there are a few limits on it.

First, the effect is **limited to the character who has been taken out**. The victor may declare that the loser has made an ass of himself in front of the admiral, but he cannot decide how the admiral will respond (or even if the admiral was particularly bothered).

Second, the **manner of the taken out result must be limited to the scope of the conflict**. After the victor wins a debate with someone, he cannot decide that the loser concedes his point and the loser gives him all the money in his pockets – money was never part of the conflict, so it's not an appropriate part of the resolution.

Third, **the effect must be reasonable for the target**. People do not (normally) explode when killed, so that cannot be a part of taking someone out. Similarly, a diplomat at the negotiating table is not going to give the victor the 'keys' to the empire – that's probably beyond the scope of his authority, and even if it's not, it's unlikely something he would give these away under any circumstances. What he will do is make a deal that is very much in the victor's favor and possibly even thank him for it.

Lastly, players are not always comfortable with being on the receiving end of this and may, if they wish, **spend all the Fate points they have left** (minimum one) and demand a different outcome, and the Story Teller (or winning character) should then make every effort to allow them to lose in a

TRAVEN REMOVED A GLOVE AND MERELY ABSORBED THE ENERGY.
I'M WORSE THAN DEAD, KAYN. LOOK, ANTI-ENERGY! MY WHOLE BODY IS LIKE THIS. ONLY THIS CONTAINMENT SUIT BINDS MY ESSENCE AND MAKES ME VISIBLE. I HAVE WAITED A LONG TIME, GATHERING MY STRENGTH AND MY HATE. NOW I'LL HUNT YOU AS YOU ONCE HUNTED ME! YOU CANNOT KILL ME WITH CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.

fashion more to their liking. That said, if this is a real concern, the loser may want to concede somewhere before things reach this point (see "Concessions", below).

Concessions

Any time a character takes a consequence, he also has the option of offering a **concession**. A concession is essentially equivalent to surrendering, and is the best way to end a fight before someone is taken out (short of moving away and ending the conflict). The character inflicting the damage can always opt to not take the concession, but doing so is a clear indication that the fight will be a bloody one (literally or metaphorically). If the Story Teller declares that the concession was a reasonable offer, then the character who offered it gains one Fate point, and the character who refused it loses one.

The concession is an offer of the terms under which the character is taken out. If the concession is accepted, the conceding character is immediately **taken out**, but rather than letting the victor determine the manner of his defeat, he is defeated according to the terms of his concession.

Many conflicts end with a concession when one party or the other simply does not want to risk taking moderate or severe consequences as a result of the conflict, or when neither party wants to risk a taken out result that might come at too high a price.

Optional Rule: Grit

Some Extras or Named Characters may be listed as having a certain amount of **grit**, usually rated at 1 or 2. This represents how committed the character is to the conflict at hand, and is the number of consequences the character will take before offering a concession. It is fairly rare for a character to be willing to go to the mat over trivial matters, so grit is somewhat contextual. If the matter ends up being of direct importance to the Extra, his grit might be considered to be higher, but if the matter is trivial, his grit might be considered to be lower.

Removing Consequences

Consequences will fade with time – characters heal, rumors die down, and distance brings perspective. How long this takes depends upon the severity of the consequence, which in turn depends upon how it was received.

Minor consequences are removed any time the character has the opportunity to sit down and take a breather for a few minutes. These consequences will last until the end of the current scene, and will usually be removed after that. The only exception is if there is no break between scenes – if the character doesn't get a chance to take five, the consequence will remain in place.

Major consequences require the character get a little more time and distance. Depending on the type of Major consequence they remain in place until the character has had the opportunity to take anything from a few hours of "downtime" up to a few days. This may mean getting treatment for some blaster burns, sleeping in a comfortable bed, spending time with a charming member of the opposite sex, or sitting on a beach to 'forget about it all' or anything else so long as it's appropriate to the consequence. An afternoon of hiking might be a great way to get past a Heartbreak consequence, but it's not a great choice for a Bad Ankle.

Severe consequences require substantial downtime, measured in a week to a few weeks. Generally this means that such a consequence will linger for the duration of a session, but could be cleared up before the next adventure begins or at least reduced one level.

Extreme consequences generally put characters in accident and emergency, in jail, in the nearest rehab, perhaps on their deathbed or fried within a micron of their life. It's likely that the character will be left with lasting effects in the form of an Aspect (such as 'Half man, half android' or 'branded a traitor'). These could require sophisticated medical treatment usually only found in major cities, or on board large capital ships, perhaps requiring a stasis pod to put what's left of you in until they can be re-constituted, cloned, re-built (as in the Planet Tamer, see page 523) or trained counsellors on hand 24/7 to stop you going over the edge. Healing or recovery will take a few months. Needless to say the experience should have a profound effect on the character and result in the change of some of their Skills and Aspects.

If the character is in back-to-back sessions where no in-game time passes between them, such as in a multi-part adventure, he gets a break – any consequences he begins the session with are treated as one level lower for how quickly they're removed.

Some Skills (such as Science, page 133) and Stunts (such as Bounce Back, page 160) can also reduce recovery time, as described in their write-ups.

Assisted Healing

Ships' Med Bays (page 320) or similar planet or spacestation based medical facilities can be used by those with a Science Skill and the Medical Attention Stunt (page 135) to provide bonuses to healing or speed the process up.

Resolving Manoeuvres

There are three types of manoeuvres – uncontested manoeuvres (without an opponent), scene-altering manoeuvres, and manoeuvres that target another character.

If the manoeuvre is uncontested – for instance, the character is trying to grab an idol or swing from a rope – it is a simple action, resolved just like any other simple action. The Story Teller sets a difficulty, and the character rolls his Skill and applies the resulting shifts as normal.

A manoeuvre can alter the scene in some way. How hard this is to do can range from trivial (knocking over a candle in a hay loft to add an "On Fire!" Aspect to the scene) to virtually impossible (flapping one's arms very hard to try to remove the "Foggy" Aspect from a scene .) Whatever the result, the Story Teller can decide whether or not the change the character makes merits adding or removing an Aspect to the scene. The expenditure of a Fate point can usually make a reasonable argument for making such a change; if the player's willing to spend the point, his character's actions to remove the Aspect are invested with an unusual potency.

If the target is another character, the manoeuvreing character and the target make opposed rolls, using whatever Skills the Story Teller deems appropriate. Success is usually achieved if the manoeuvreing character generates at least one shift. A successful manoeuvre may add a temporary Aspect to the targeted character; the target can either accept the

temporary Aspect, or spend a Fate point to avoid accepting it. An Aspect that results from a manoeuvre is temporary and does not last very long – we'll get to the duration in a moment. The temporary Aspect may then be tagged for a bonus on a subsequent roll. The *first* tag usually doesn't cost the tagging player a Fate point, but subsequent tags usually do (see the Aspects chapter, page 85, for more on the methods of tagging Aspects). If a character is simply trying to increase the difficulty of another target's action, this is considered a block action, and should be resolved as such; see page 217.

Manuevers can also have other special effects, as determined by the Story Teller. Some examples of these kinds of manoeuvres are given later in this chapter.

Temporary Aspects

Temporary Aspects that result from manoeuvres are usually **fragile**. A fragile Aspect only exists for a single tag, and may even be cleared away by a simple change of circumstances. Consider someone who uses a manoeuvre to take aim at a target, placing an "In My Sights" Aspect on the target. Once the shot's taken, the aim goes away – this is clearly fragile. But it could get lost even before the first shot, if the character who (likely unwittingly) has the Aspect on him manages to break line of sight or move significantly. Fragile temporary Aspects are usually much easier to justify and pass muster with the Story Teller.

Some Aspects that result from manoeuvres can be **sticky**. (Aspects that result from assessments or declarations, explained on page 98, are also usually sticky.) Sticky Aspects don't go away after they're first tagged, allowing people to spend Fate points to continue to tag them. The Story Teller is encouraged to be much more picky about whether or not to allow a sticky Aspect to result from a manoeuvre.

In many cases, the Story Teller may require that the manoeuvreing character use spin (see page 230) in order to succeed at placing a sticky Aspect. Sticky Aspects may be easier to place on a location or scene than on another character, especially when they potentially offer complications to everyone present, on both sides – such as a manoeuvre to add an "On Fire!" Aspect to a scene. It may be possible to remove a sticky Aspect via a successful manuever.

Some Example Manoeuvres

This is not a comprehensive list of all possible manoeuvres, but the examples provided below should cover a wide range of circumstance and provide the tools needed to cover unexpected situations.

Blinding

Whether it's throwing sand in someone's eyes, spraying someone with a harsh chemical or tossing a can of paint in his face, the goal is the same: keep him from being able to see. This likely involves the attacker rolling Weapons and the defender rolling Athletics, with the manoeuvre succeeding if the attacker gets at least one shift. A successful manoeuvre puts the Aspect "Blinded" on the target, which may be compelled to add to the defense of their target, or to cause them to change the subject or direction of an action. It can't force them to take an action they don't want to (so a blinded character can't be compelled to walk off a cliff if the character is not moving around).

Disarming

A successful disarm manoeuvre forces the target to drop his weapon or otherwise renders the weapon temporarily useless. The target must either spend an action to become re-armed, or pick up the weapon as a supplemental action. A supplemental action is normally a -1 penalty to the main action, but when a disarm manoeuvre is used, the shifts on the manoeuvre increase the penalty. For example, if the disarm attempt succeeds with three shifts, when the target tries to recover his weapon, he'll be at -4 (-1 for the usual penalty, plus an additional -3) to his action that exchange – essentially the disarm manoeuvre has resulted in a block. His defensive rolls are not directly affected by this penalty, but they are indirectly affected; without a weapon in hand, he can't use the Weapons Skill to defend (Athletics and Fists are still options).

Indirect Attacks

Sometimes a character wants to do something like push a stack of boxes down on an opponent, or scatter marbles across the floor to trip him up. While this can potentially be an attack, it is usually meant as an inconvenience. If it's an attack, it's treated like any other attack. If it's an inconvenience, the attacker has two options. The first option is to make an opposed roll (such as Might to knock over the bookcase versus

Athletics to dodge) and generate at least one shift, allowing a temporary Aspect (such as "Pinned") to be placed on the target. The other option is to create a block (such as using Might to knock over the bookcase, with the value of the roll representing the block strength created by the scattered books, causing an opponent to have to roll Athletics in order to move through the mess).

Carrying

When the character carries something heavy, the penalty for a supplemental action is increased by the weight factor of the target (see page 126) for each zone he moves.

Pushing

Pushing a target requires a successful attack (usually Fists or Might) and must generate a number of shifts equal to the weight of the target +1 for each zone the target will be pushed (the +1 is basically the usual -1 for moving). While a throw or knockback moves the target to a different zone, a push moves both the target and the acting character into the destination. Because of this, the "cost" in shifts for pushing remains flat, while the cost for body-throwing and knockback increases over distance (see below). Any applicable border conditions affect the roll to push.

Throw or Knockback

It's possible for a character to knock something or someone away from himself, without moving. Knockback covers any manoeuvre that can accomplish this, including throws. To knock something back one zone requires the manoeuvre have a success of 1 plus the weight factor of the target (a normal person has a weight factor of 2, see page 126). Each additional zone costs as much as the previous zone did, plus one, so that the cost increases dramatically over distance.

Marking

Every now and again a character just needs to carve his initial on someone's chest, as simple as that. While it's not a damaging attack, it's a demoralizing one, and it adds a temporary Aspect "Marked" which can be tagged to take advantage of the opponent's reduced morale or appearance. The attack and defense roll for this is whatever's appropriate to the situation – probably Weapons versus Athletics.

Minions

The term **minions** is used to refer to the large number of "faceless" followers of more important, "named" characters in a scene. The named characters are the villains of the piece; the minions are the bodies of the faithful (or at least the hapless) that the heroes must climb over to take on the named characters.

Minions have two important statistics, **quality** and **quantity**. The Story Teller may build their villains' minion mobs using Stunts – see page 173– but should feel free to be a little loose with the rules if looking to size the minions appropriately to the opposition.

Minions may be either Average, Fair or Good quality. This quality denotes their base effectiveness in one sort of conflict (physical, social or mental), as well as their capacity for stress. Average minions can take one box of stress, Fair can take two, and Good can take three.

The quantity of minions is simply the number of minions present, but together, minions act in one or more groups, each of which is treated as single characters in a conflict. This allows the Story Teller to minimize the number of die rolls she's making, even when her heroes are facing off against a group of twenty frothing cultists. This shorthand technique also makes it a touch easier for the heroes to eliminate several minions in a single action.

Minions who act together as a group are much more effective than individual minions. When there are two or three minions in a group, the group receives a +1 bonus to act and react. If there are four to six minions in a group, the bonus is +2; seven to nine minions get a +3 bonus, and any single group with ten or more members gets +4.

As a rule of thumb, when a Story Teller has a large number of minions, she should split them up into several smaller groups – preferably one group for each player character they face. These groups don't necessarily need to be equal in number; sometimes it makes sense to pit the largest group of minions against the most capable opponent.

When minions take stress damage, any overflow of damage is applied to the next minion. This means a solid enough effort can take out an entire swath of minions.

Mixed Groups

One of the main uses for minions, be they ninjas or yes-men, is to improve the effectiveness of their leader. Whenever a named character and a group of minions are attacking the same target, they are considered to be attached. This has two benefits for the leader: he receives a bonus based on the group size (including him), and damage is applied to minions before it's applied to him. It has no benefits for the minions, who give up their ability to act independently, but that's more or less their job (see the Leadership Skill for more, page 124). Leaving or attaching to a group is a free action, and a character may detach from a group automatically by moving away from it.

Companions

Companions are characters who are a little more important than minions but are not quite full-fledged named characters in their own right. They are attached to named characters in the same way minion groups are, and grant a +1 in appropriate conflicts due to group size. Companions have one stress box per level of Quality (see below) and give their character the ability to withstand an additional consequence – specifically, the consequence that the Companion is taken out, kidnapped, or otherwise removed from the conflict.

Type	Conflicts
Sidekick	Physical
Aide	Social
Assistant	Mental/Knowledge

Companions are either granted as a short-term story element by the Story Teller, or are established through the purchase and use of a number of Stunts detailed below.

By default, a companion is of Average quality and can assist in one type of conflict. The type of conflict that the Companion can assist with determines her type. Whilst they are attached they provide a +1 group bonus to their leader in the Skills they know, and the leader may substitute their Skill level in place of his own if it's higher. A companion requires a Fate point to act alone.

A companion can have a number of **advances**, with each advance making her more capable. Usually, when a named character gains a sidekick, aide, or assistant (through a Stunt), the companion gets a number of advances to begin with, and the named character can buy more advances with additional Stunts. Here is a summary of the Stunts that allow companions (and minions) along with details of the advances they provide. Each time a character takes one of these Stunts they may either create a new companion/set of minions, or add 3 advances to the existing ones.

- Mininons – gives one free 'strength in numbers' advance and 3 other advances
- Animal Companion – gives 4 advances within the limitations of the Stunt
- Contacts – gives the 'Independent' advance for free, and 3 other advances
- Gambling Buddy – gives the 'Independent' and 'Skilled' advances plus two other advances for free, though Gambling must be one of the companions Skills.
- Spirit Companion – gives the 'Summonable' advance for free and three other advances. Does not get the 'Independent' advance for free.
- Lieutenant – gives 'Fair Quality', 'Independent' and 'Skilled' advances for free, plus one other advance. You need not take it multiple times but you may if you want. Each additional time it is taken gives three advances.
- Network of Contacts – gives the 'Summonable' and 'Variable Summons' advances for free plus two others
- Sucker – gives the 'Fair Quality', and 'Skilled' advances for free plus two others. One of his Skills must be Resources.
- Trusted Employee – gives the 'Fair Quality' and 'Independent' advances for free and you may choose 3 additional advances as well. This companion gets 1 additional advance because it's actually converting the employee gained in the previous 'Headquarters' Stunt in to a full companion.
- Personal Conspiracy – gives either a minor functionary with a 'Summonable' and 'Variable Summons' advances plus one other advance or an officer in the conspiracy who

gets 'Summonable', 'Variable Summons', 'Independent', and 2 other advances of your choice. Be careful though, if you bother an officer with requests, he may have objectives of his own that he might expect you to assist with. For this Stunt, the 'Independent' behaves in a different way. The Story Teller selects the 2 Aspects the companion has access to. One will usually be the player character's Aspect that is related to the conspiracy, but the other can be whatever the Story Teller thinks is appropriate, or will lead to some mischief! For the rest of the scene, both the character and the companion receive this Aspect and the player may not refuse Compels based on it for his character or companion, unless he is willing to offend the conspiracy. This could lead to banishment, punishment or being marked for death!

Consider an Aspect

While characters are not obliged to take their companion as an Aspect, it is highly recommended. Companions are the first people villains choose as hostages and targets, and by choosing to take an appropriate Aspect, the player ensures that he'll be rewarded for the inconvenience.

Attachment – Only one companion may 'attach' to a character at a time, the same as a minion might, taking hits to its stress track or a consequence in substitute for the character's own. An attached companion can't take actions on his own (unless the character spends a Fate point), though the companions Skills are available to the character while attached.

Advances – Companions have the number of advances indicated in the list above. An advance may be spent on one of: Quality, Scope, Stunt, Communication, Independent, Keeping Up, Skilled, Strength In Numbers, Summonable and Variable Summons.

Quality – Companions start with a base quality of Average, and it's quality may be increased by one step for each advance spent on Quality. Quality reflects how Skills and resilient the companion is. Companions get one stress as a base plus one for each point of Quality. Companions also get a single Skill column (instead of a pyramid) with a number of Skills equal to their Quality. For example a Good quality companion has one Good, 1 Fair and 1 Average Skill and 4 stress, a Fair quality companion has 1 Fair and 1 Average Skill and 3 stress. Remember they can still only take one consequence!

Advances

An advance can do one of the following:

Communication

The companion has some means of communicating with her patron in even the strangest of circumstances – using secret Star Patrol commicators, ancient alien powers, etc. This isn't a guarantee, and without an Aspect invested in a companion, a player isn't going to get compensated on the occasion that the Story Teller decides to short out the method of communication. Still, Story Tellers should think twice before cutting off a character from his companion, when this advance is in play.

Independent

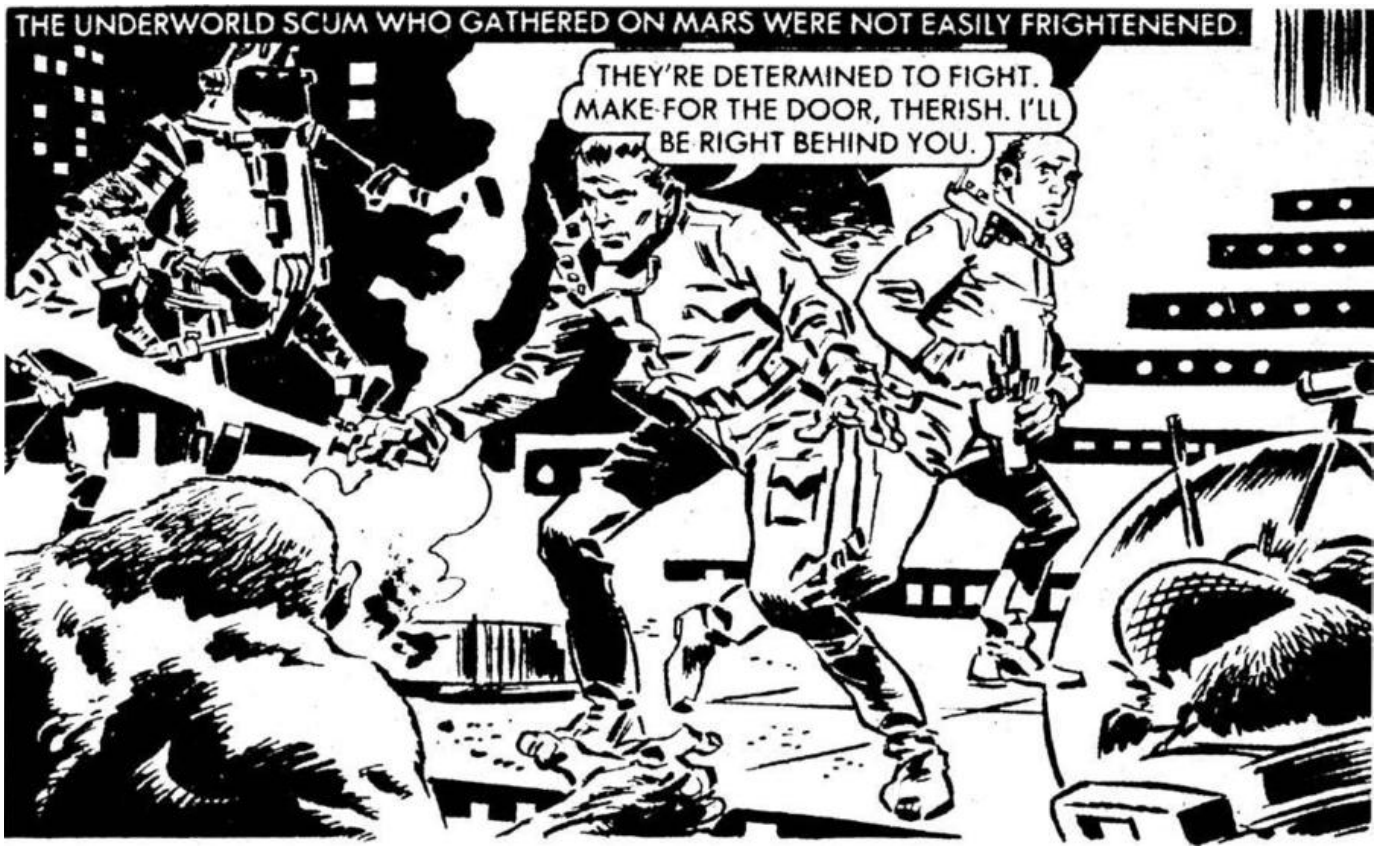
In order to send a companion off on a significant mission on their own (trivial tasks like fetching a cup of 25th century tea don't count) a character must spend a Fate point, unless they have taken this advance for the companion. Whilst on this mission the independent advance allows the companion to access their characters Fate points and up to 2 Aspects of their character that would also apply to him as well.

Keeping up

If the companion's patron has a means of locomotion or stealth that makes it hard for the companion to keep up with him, then the companion with this advance has a similar ability, but it is useful only for keeping up with her patron when attached, and for no other purpose.

Quality

Improve the quality of a companion by one step (from Average to Fair, Fair to Good, and so on). This advance may be taken several times up to the companion's maximum quality, which is one step lower than that of her leader. (characters usually top out at Superb, so the most one of their companions could be is Great.)


THE UNDERWORLD SCUM WHO GATHERED ON MARS WERE NOT EASILY FRIGHTENENED.
THEY'RE DETERMINED TO FIGHT. MAKE FOR THE DOOR, THERISH. I'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

Scope

Improve the scope of a companion, allowing them to assist in an additional type of conflict (e.g., Physical and Mental, Physical and Social, Social and Mental). This may be taken twice, allowing the companion to be effective in all three scopes.

Skilled

Each time this advance is taken the companion gets an additional column of Skills. However each new column is one rank lower than the last column. For example a Good quality companion with the Skilled advance would have 1 Good, 2 Fair, 2 Average Skills. Another Skilled advance would add only 1 Average Skill.

Strength In Numbers

You have more than one ally! The first time this advance is taken the character gains 2 additional allies (for a total of 3) that are identical in Skills, advances and quality. Each additional time this advance is taken gives the character 3 more allies. However these hordes of minions are limited to their leaders quality minus 2 not minus 1 as is usual for a single companion. Also minions only get a number of Stress boxes equal to their Quality not their Quality+1

Stunt

This advance allows the companion to take a single Stunt and may be taken a maximum of two times. This does not allow the Companion to takes companions or minions themselves.

Summonable

No matter where you are you can summon your ally to you. This normally takes at least one minute but you may spend a Fate point to accomplish it in a single round. A summoned companion vanishes or leaves if the summoning character is Taken Out, and will not last more than one scene either way. They may be summoned again in a later scene if needed again. This advance may only be taken once.

Variable Summons (requires Summonable)

Usually the same companion is summoned each time but this advance allows the character to allocate his advances when the companion is first summoned. This may only be done once per adventure unless the summoner spends a Fate point to reallocate the advances again. This advance may only be taken once. This could represent A mystical ability or a vast network of friends, allies or members of a secret organisation keeping watch over the character.

B

Minion vs Companions:

Who gets them?

Unspoken in the above is a simple assumption, which you may choose to make use of or ignore as you see fit, and it's this: minions are for bad guys – or at least NPCs – while companions are for the players. There will most certainly be exceptions – companions are the most able to show up in both – but very often it simply isn't thematically appropriate for a player's character to run about with twenty-odd minions at his beck and call. A plucky sidekick, on the other hand, is entirely in keeping...

Overflow

When a character takes an action (an attack or a manoeuvre) against groups of minions, he will occasionally succeed by far more than anticipated. This leaves him in a situation where he has a large number of "wasted" shifts. These surplus shifts are called **overflow**, and can be used in an immediate, follow-up action so long as it's not as another attack or other offensive manoeuvre. To put it simply, overflow is used to take supplemental actions.

When fighting "named" (non-minion) characters, overflow exists only as the number of shifts that are left over after the minimum number are used to produce a taken out (or consequence-producing) result.

Spin

In its broadest sense, **spin** is a special effect that occurs whenever a character scores a significant or better success (3 shifts or more). That special effect may simply be color – it may mean the character looks particularly cool, or is due some recognition for excellence. However, in some cases, gaining spin can result in an actual game effect.

Specific to combat, spin is a minor, defensive form of overflow (see above) used to represent minor changes in the cadence of a conflict. Applied to a defense, when a character who successfully defends against an attack roll by three or more, he gains spin.

Having gained spin, the character has the option to apply a bonus or penalty to the next roll that occurs. Defensive spin *must* be used on the very next action taken by *anyone* in the scene (whether it's a hero's action or villain's action). Used this way,

spin either adds one or subtracts one from any roll involved in that action (e.g., either the attack roll or the defense roll).

The player who gained spin on his defense chooses how that spin works into the scene. Thus, the only qualifier for using spin is that the character must explain how he was able to help or hinder, even if it's just as simple as shouting some encouragement or providing a distraction. A player might not always be able to justify using spin. Spin that isn't used on the next action simply goes away.

Note that spin, when used, is an effect that occurs *instead* of overflow. For example, someone might succeed on a defense by 3 shifts, generating spin. He could use his spin to give someone else a +1 as described above, or he could *instead* treat those three shifts as overflow, using it to dive clear of an impending explosion, or some other supplemental action.

Spin may affect certain manoeuvres; see "Temporary Aspects" earlier in this chapter (page 224). And there are other applications of spin, found throughout this book. In general, spin serves as an easy way of making note that a character has done particularly well on a roll. In particular, Skill and Stunt uses might also create spin and utilize spin in special ways; see the individual descriptions for more details.

The "+1 on the next action" effect of spin, however, only occurs as a result of a *defensive roll* in a conflict. This is because defensive rolls don't usually get to use shifts when they succeed ; spin allows for a particularly good roll to be recognized, and not to go "wasted".

Using The Environment

In the Aspects chapter, we talk about tagging scene Aspects for bonuses. Another thing that scene Aspects can be used for is the occasional use of one Skill in lieu of another, in a way that Skill wouldn't normally be used.

To do so, invoke the Aspect (spend a Fate point) to create a **reasonable justification** for the unusual Skill's use; the character may use the new Skill for as long as the Story Teller considers appropriate. If the new Skill has a dramatic impact that is potent for its novelty, it is probably only appropriate for one roll, but sometime the Skill may be appropriate for the entire scene.

Weapons & Guns

In ***Starblazer Adventures*** weapons and guns add a bonus to stress inflicted on a successful hit. See page 219 for more details. There are two manoeuvres available for guns and weapons and guns can have certain special effects.

Gun Manoeuvres

Empty the clip

You set the weapon to auto fire and inflict double the bonus this round, but take the Aspect of 'out of ammo' on the projectile weapon or 'overheated' on the energy weapon next round. This means the character must repair the energy weapon or find more ammo for the gun.

Set to explode

Turn an energy weapon in to a small bomb with Superb power, detonating on the next turn. See page 239 for rules on explosives.

Special Effects

Certain guns and weapons may have special effects which place Aspects and consequences on targets in

addition to stress inflicted. If the target is not able to remove, escape or deal with the Aspect in their next round then the Aspect becomes a consequence of the level detailed by the weapon effect. Cover and Shields reduce the level of the consequence by the level of their modifier plus any barrier rating such as a wall.

Sample Weapon Effects

Ignore energy shields	shields do not absorb damage or consequences inflicted by this weapon or gun
Ignore Armour	armour does not absorb damage or consequences inflicted by this weapon or gun
Freeze	place a 'frozen' Aspect on target if the target is successfully hit and a Minor, Major or Serious consequence depending on the power of the weapon. Shields & Armour do help defend against the attack.
Burn	place a 'burning' Aspect on target if the target is successfully hit and a Minor, Major or Serious consequence depending on the power of the weapon. Shields & Armour do help defend against the attack.
Stun	place a 'stunned' Aspect on target if the target is successfully hit and a Minor, Major or Serious consequence depending on the power of the weapon. Shields do help defend against the attack
Explosive	Everything in the target zone is attacked by the explosive force (see page 242) of the weapon

Personal Defences

There are several types of personal defence, from your typical armour which defends against knives and bullets to sophisticated energy shields or assault armour designed to stop nearly anything.

B

One golden rule to bear in mind as the Story Teller if you create an opponent or special artifact is that armour should never be rated higher than -3 to stress damage so that there is always a weapon that can inflict some damage through it. Otherwise you end up with boring fights where attacks are barely scratching the bad guy.. Also there should be no invulnerabilities without weaknesses – the Death Star had its Exhaust Port, Achilles had his heel. If you're going to give a character, monster or bad guy an invulnerability to guns, make sure there's a weakness the players or enemies can exploit (if they discover it).

Armour & Energy Shield Types

These are rated -1,-2 or -3 which is the amount of stress they can absorb from each successful attack, before the wearer has to absorb stress. If an attacker gets a successful hit then the shield or armour value is deducted from the total stress inflicted (including any weapon bonus). To absorb additional stress, armour and shields can take one or more consequences reflecting the damage to the actual worn armour, the shield's energy pack or projector, etc. For example an Assault Energy Shield could take Minor: Throwing Sparks! Major: Smoking! Severe: Flickering! Extreme: Burnt Circuits! Then taken out! Consequences taken on defences can, of course, be tagged for effects by attackers so be careful! Consequences can be repaired by qualified Engineers (Armour & Energy Shields) or Scientists (Energy Shields).

Depending on the prevailing technology a Story Teller can decide that the total modifier for all armour and shields also counts as a penalty to all manoeuvres and Skill based checks against acrobatics, athletics and stealth.

Combining Armour & Shields

If the Story-Teller agrees you may combine any armour and energy shields, however, you may not combine Assault Shields and Assault Armour. Optionally a Story Teller can decide to put a cap on combined personal defences of -4 meaning you could have armour rated -3 but energy shield -1, or both at -2.

Remember also that the combined defense also acts as a penalty to all movement related Skill checks and this will be a natural check on players desires to overly protect their characters.

Blade & Projectile Armour

This kind of armour absorbs stress from blade or blunt melee weapons and projectile weapons. It has no effect on energy weapons damage.

Blade & Projectile Armour -1
Can take 1 minor consequence before it is taken out / destroyed.

Blade & Projectile Armour -2
Can take 1 minor consequence and 1 major before it is taken out / destroyed.

Blade & Projectile Armour -3
Can take 1 minor consequence, 1 major, 1 Severe before it is taken out / destroyed.

Assault Armour -3
Can take 1 minor consequence, 1 major, 1 Severe and 1 Extreme before it is taken out / destroyed.

Energy Shields

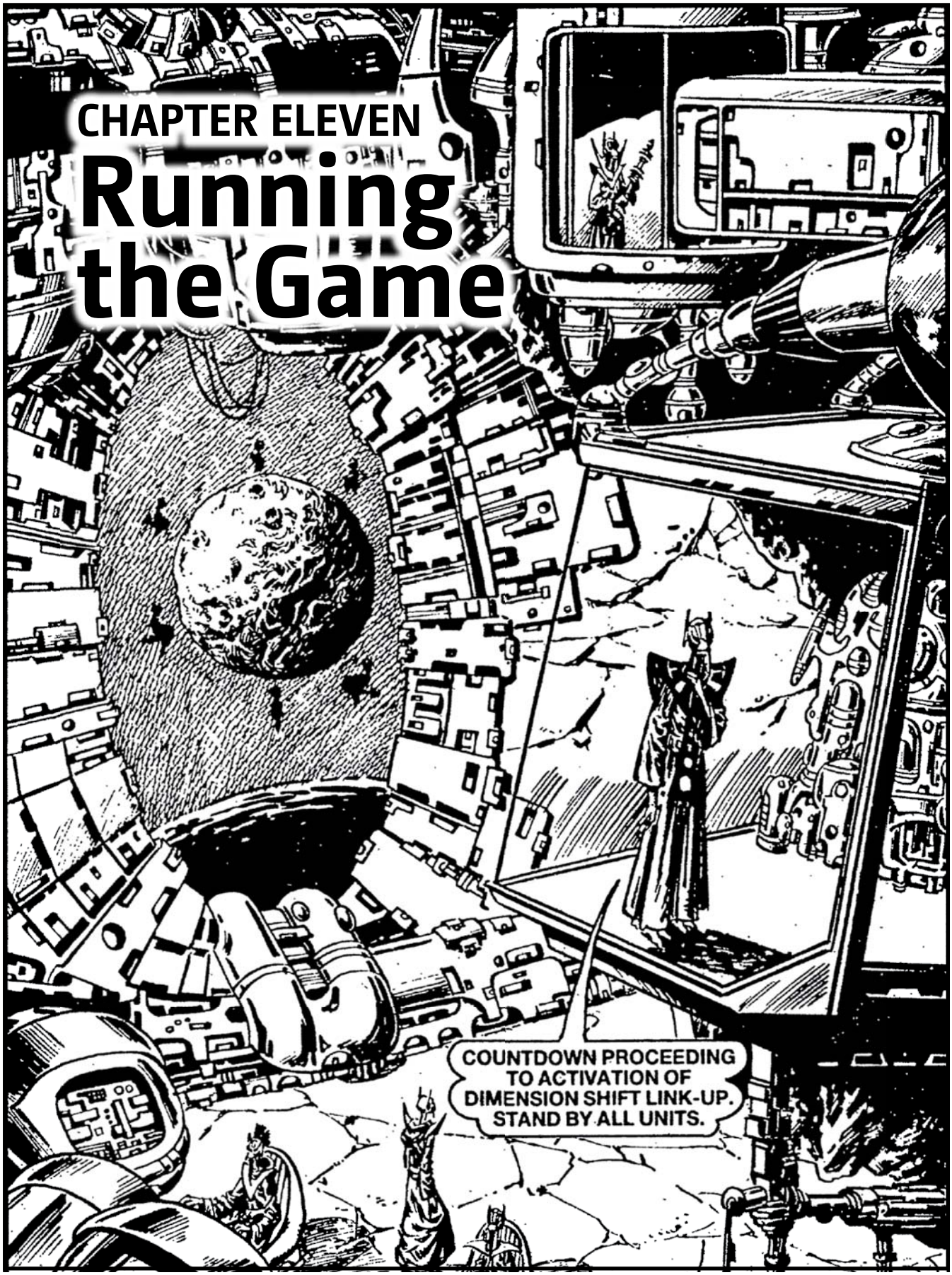
Energy Shields absorb stress from energy weapon attacks. They provide no defence against projectile weapons, blade or blunt melee weapons.

Energy Shield -1
Can take 1 minor consequence before it is taken out / destroyed.

Energy Shield -2
Can take 1 minor consequence and 1 major before it is taken out / destroyed.

Energy Shield -3
Can take 1 minor consequence, 1 major and 1 Severe before it is taken out / destroyed.

Assault Energy Shield -3
Can take 1 minor consequence, 1 major, 1 Severe and 1 Extreme before it is taken out / destroyed.


CHAPTER ELEVEN
Running the Game
COUNTDOWN PROCEEDING TO ACTIVATION OF DIMENSION SHIFT LINK-UP. STAND BY ALL UNITS.

Running The Game

In this chapter, we'll take a look under the hood of our suped up space opera game machine, and see how to make use of Skills from the Story Teller's end of things. We'll also talk about general principles for setting difficulties and other common situations as a Story Teller. Overall, the focus here is to provide the Story Teller with extensive (perhaps, at times, *too* extensive!) guidance on how to make the dice-rolling stuff really work. In the Skills chapter, page 98, you can find detailed information on how to use those Skill and any special uses (which is why we put a section on poisons under the Endurance section, for example).

Setting Difficulties

Before you – the Story Teller – call for a die roll, it is critically important that you stop and do two things:

1. Imagine Success
2. Imagine Failure

It sounds simple, but it can make a critical difference. Success is usually the easy part, but failure can be bit trickier. You want to make sure that both outcomes are interesting , though interesting certainly doesn't need to mean good.

If you cannot come up with a way to handle either outcome, you need to rethink the situation.

It's as simple as that, because there are few things more frustrating to a player than making a Skill roll and getting told that it nets them no new knowledge, no suggested course of action, no new development for the story, and so on.

So, whenever you call for a roll, be absolutely certain you understand what failure or success entails. If one or the other branch does not suggest a course of action, then calling for a roll is probably a bad idea.

Now, that said, every roll does not need to have high stakes. There should always be a consequence to failure, but there are degrees of consequence, and minor setbacks may be overcome for a larger success. If there is a large issue on the table, try not to have it hinge entirely on one roll – spread it out across the scene. Just as a roll has consequences, so does a scene, and the scene should have meaningful consequences.

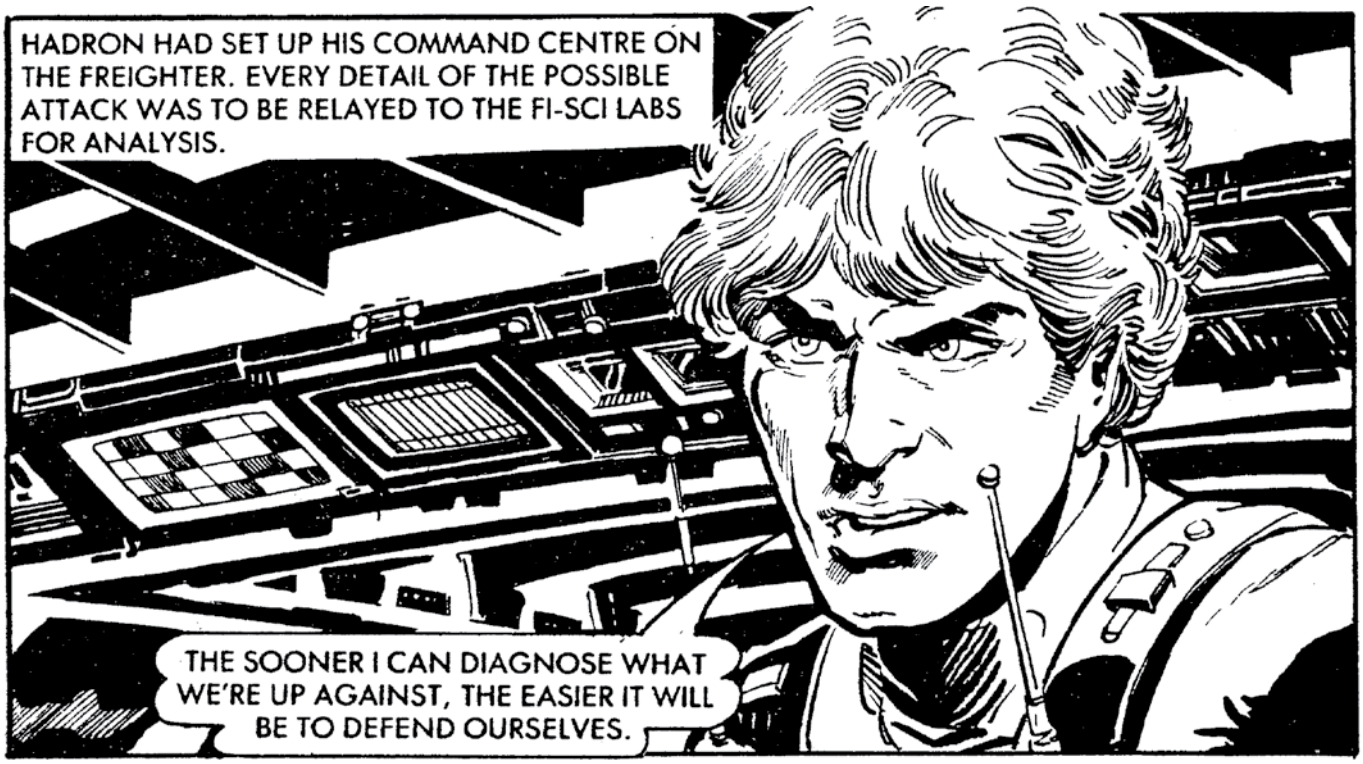
The whole point of the consequences is to keep players engaged. It makes rolls into something a little more meaningful than hoping to get lucky on a die roll. That fact is the ultimate informer on how you want to set difficulties. The goal is to make any roll satisfying.

With that in mind, as a general guideline, difficulties should be set low (with a few exceptions we'll cover in this chapter). If you leave difficulties at the default of Mediocre (+0) then characters will almost always succeed, but there is still a chance for failure. What this means is that characters will rarely fail, but failure is still a possibility in most circumstances. You can increase difficulties from that, but always stop and think about why you want to do that. The answer should always be "because you want failure to be more likely" – hopefully because failure's cool too.

If you are tempted to make a roll so difficult that failure is likely, make sure you've got a solid reason why that's so, and why you're calling for a roll.

With difficulties set low, shifts (page 21) become critically important. When the question is not "will they succeed?" then it becomes "how (or how much) will they succeed?", and that means the number of shifts a character generates on a roll becomes the yardstick you can use to frame how something turns out. The bottom line here is that every roll should be fun, whether it succeeds or fails.

Effect	Description
0 shifts	**Minimal success** – The character pulled it off. It's neither pretty nor graceful, but it works, at least for now.
1 shift	**Notable success** – This is a clear-cut success. The character's result is solid, reliable, and while it may not be inspired, it is absolutely workmanlike.
3 shifts	**Significant success** – The success is sufficient enough to be noticeably well done, and will be of fine quality, very reliable and so on. A significant or better success can be said to generate spin (see below).
5 shifts	**Potent success** – Not only is the quality of the success remarkable, it may have some unexpected, secondary benefits, such as a deeper insight into a problem at hand.


HADRON HAD SET UP HIS COMMAND CENTRE ON THE FREIGHTER. EVERY DETAIL OF THE POSSIBLE ATTACK WAS TO BE RELAYED TO THE FI-SCI LABS FOR ANALYSIS.
THE SOONER I CAN DIAGNOSE WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST, THE EASIER IT WILL BE TO DEFEND OURSELVES.

Spin

In the interests of repeating ourselves: In its broadest sense, spin is a special effect that occurs whenever a character scores a significant or better success (3 shifts or more). That special effect may simply be colour – it may mean the character looked particularly cool, or is due some recognition for excellence. In some cases, as outlined in Skills and elsewhere, gaining spin can result in an actual game effect. In combat, if a character gets spin on a defensive, he can add a +1 to the very next action that occurs (even if it's not his own). Other applications of spin, found throughout the text, will exist as well, but in general, it serves as an easy way of making note that a character has done particularly well on a roll. Whenever characters roll well enough to generate spin, it's time to sit up, pay attention, and spice up the details. See page 230 for deeper details on the concept of spin.

Setting Declaration Difficulties

Some Skills (such as knowledge Skills like Academics) may allow a player to make declarations. A declaration is typically a player-driven assertion that there is a particular Aspect (determined by the player) on a particular target (an individual character, group, location, scene, or story). Broadly, declarations allow players to introduce *facts* into the setting and storyline.

The difficulties for declarations should, honestly, be based on how interesting the proposed fact or Aspect is. Ideas which would disrupt the game or are just unreasonable should simply be vetoed. These are the questions to ask yourself when determining difficulty:

1. Is the declaration interesting (or funny)?
2. Will the declaration have interesting consequences if it's acted upon but is wrong?
3. Does the declaration propose a specific and interesting or heroic course of action?

Each "no" adds 2 to the base difficulty of Mediocre. If the proposed fact is very amusing, proposes an interesting course of action and has interesting consequences if wrong (three "yes"-es), a Mediocre difficulty is appropriate. By contrast, a boring fact with a dull course of action and no possible consequences has a difficulty of Fantastic.

If your players haven't quite got a grasp of how much they can do with declarations, you will probably need to lower the difficulties to suit – but you should let them know what makes a declaration more likely to succeed.

Setting Assessment Difficulties

Several Skills (perception Skills especially) may be used to make assessments. An assessment is an effort made by a character to discover one or more hidden Aspects about a particular target (an individual, group, location, or scene). If the target of an assessment is a person or a group, the difficulty of the assessment is usually an opposed Skill roll. Static entities like locations or objects typically have difficulties based on their quality. If there's no obvious way to determine the assessment difficulty, consider the baseline difficulty to be Mediocre.

Target	Difficulty
Person	Usually Rapport or Deceit (see Skills).
Location	Quality of concealment (default Mediocre).
Group	Usually Leadership of group's "Named" leader, otherwise, quality level of the minions in the group.

At the Story Teller's discretion, if a character gains spin (page 230) on an assessment roll, he may gain insight into a more potent fact, or one additional fact – potentially allowing good rolls to result in the revelation of two Aspects.

Time

When a character takes an action, it is expected to take a certain amount of time, ranging from a few moments to a few days. Sometimes characters need to take longer to do something or want to do some-thing a little faster. When that happens, take a look at this chart and find how long the tasks should take.

Each shift the character generates that is put towards doing something fast makes the task one step faster.

Time increments are used in many ways, such as healing. For example, a Major Consequence takes from a few hours to a few days to heal. If a character had taken a Consequence such as a blaster burn, then it would be appropriate for this to take a few days healing time. If another member of the group made a succesful use of the Science Skill in a med lab to give Medical Attention then time would be reduced one step from 'a few days' to ' day'.

Time Increments

- Instant
- A few moments
- Half a minute
- A minute
- A few minutes
- 15 minutes
- Half an hour
- An hour
- A few hours
- An afternoon
- A day
- A few days
- A week
- A few weeks
- A month
- A few months
- A season
- Half a year
- A year
- A few years
- A decade
- A lifetime

Taking Your Time

When a character fails a roll to perform a task that he reasonably should be able to do, the Story Teller can simply rule that the task succeeds but takes longer than it normally would. For each step of additional time the character spends on the action, he gains a retroactive +1 on the roll, to a maximum of +4.

Zero Gravity

No space opera game would be complete without a horde of axe and blaster wielding marines fighting in zero-gravity. Characters without the zero-g training Stunt for the Weapons or Guns Skill will suffer a -1 modifier to their attacks. Characters with this training also get a +1 to maneuver rolls in defence.

Using a Grav Pack or Grav Belt (see Equipment page 67) negates the -1 modifier for using a weapon or gun in zero-g and enables fast movement around a zero-g environment. Low-tech versions such as rocket packs do not negate the modifier for attacks.

Vacuum & Hazardous Environments

Characters exposed to vacuum suffer a consequence every turn they are exposed to vacuum. With a Space Survival Suit a character can survive for up to a day of game time.

Hazardous Environment Suits provide one level of protection against radiation and full protection against toxic and biological agents, poisons and disease exposure. Otherwise the character suffers the full effects.

Radiation Effects

In the world of space opera, radiation has bizarre effects unlike the real world. There are several levels of radiation that can affect characters and creatures in the game, causing damage and even bizarre mutations. Possible ways of generating radiation attacks are listed next to the radiation effects. Note that nukes would also have physically damaging effects. See explosions on page 239.

Radiation attacks can be treated as a simple one off attack to cause damage or as a full conflict lasting a certain number of turns. The power of the radiation is the length of the attack in turns and the attack strength. If a character gets Taken Out they can cancel the result by taking a mutation Skill, an Extreme consequence can be cancelled by taking a mutation Skill and Minor, Major and Severe consequences can be cancelled in favour of a mutation Stunt. Each Skill must also be accompanied by a minor weakness which can be chosen by the player.

Example Radiation	Conseq.	Power
Unshielded experiment	Minor	Good
Radiation Grenade	Major	Great
Mini Nuke/Solar Flare	Severe	Fantastic
Nuke/Cosmic Rays	Extreme	Legendary

The character must make a roll on Endurance (which obviously defaults to mediocre if they don't have the Skill) versus the power of the radiation for their body to shake off the effects. Shielding (suggested below) reduces the power of the radiation by the number of levels listed. If the character fails to defend against the radiation attack then the character takes the listed consequence. If the character succeeds then the consequence is reduced by one level for every shift generated.

Possible ways of blocking the radiation:

- **Hazardous Environment Suit or Space Survival Suit** - reduce power one level
- **Spaceship wall** – reduce power four levels
- **Energy Shields** – reduce power by a number of levels equal to the Skill level of the shields.
- **Facility Radiation Shielding** (e.g Fi-Sci's Haz Mat Lab's wall) – reduce power two levels

For example a character wearing a Space Survival Suit inside a Starship with Average (+1) Energy Shields will be protected up to a Mini Nuke or Solar Flate.

Treatment for radiation exposure

If characters who have taken a mutation in place of a 'Taken Out' result receive immediate treatment in a med-bay or medical facility of at least Superb Skill, within one week of the attack then their Mutations can be removed. After that mutations can only be removed and 'healed' in an advanced specialist hospital, the kind of place which should be very rare! Look, tentacles could be kind of cool, right?!

Diseases

If a character comes in to contact with a dangerous disease it can cause damage, and mutation. The disease should be rated as a Skill level (such as Great

(+4) Centaurian Red Fire) by the Story Teller and type (Airbourne or Contact). The disease attacks versus the character's Endurance Skill. If successful the character becomes a carrier, and on a success of 2 or more Shifts the character is both a carrier and suffering from the disease.

Whenever the character is in the same zone as another living being of the same race, that is not protected, an airbourne disease makes an attack as above on any targets in the same zone who are unprotected. If the diseased character is in the same zone as others and is carrying a Contact disease they can make a physical attack using their Fists Skill (attempt to pass on the disease violently). If successful the target is also attacked in the same way by the disease.

Characters with the disease must get medical treatment in a sickbay or hospital otherwise they take a consequence every time period which can be decided by the Story Teller depending on the severity of the disease. It could be every day, every week or every few months. If they receive treatment from a character with the Doctor Stunt with medical supplies this is reduced by one time period but a full cure can only be found in a hospital of Skill level Superb or greater. Characters with the disease will find it very difficult to travel in high tech environments. The Story Teller may decide the cure to a disease is hard to find and requires a difficult journey.

Diseases could also cause mutations or produce special abilities or weaknesses as side affects. This could be played as an ongoing conflict with the strength of the disease versus the character's Endurance. Just like a radiation attack, if the character get's taken out they can reduce the Taken Out status and consequences by taking mutations.

Fire

Fire and other environmental hazards are rated by their **intensity**. At the beginning of the exchange, they inflict that much physical stress on every person in the scene. Intensity works as follows.

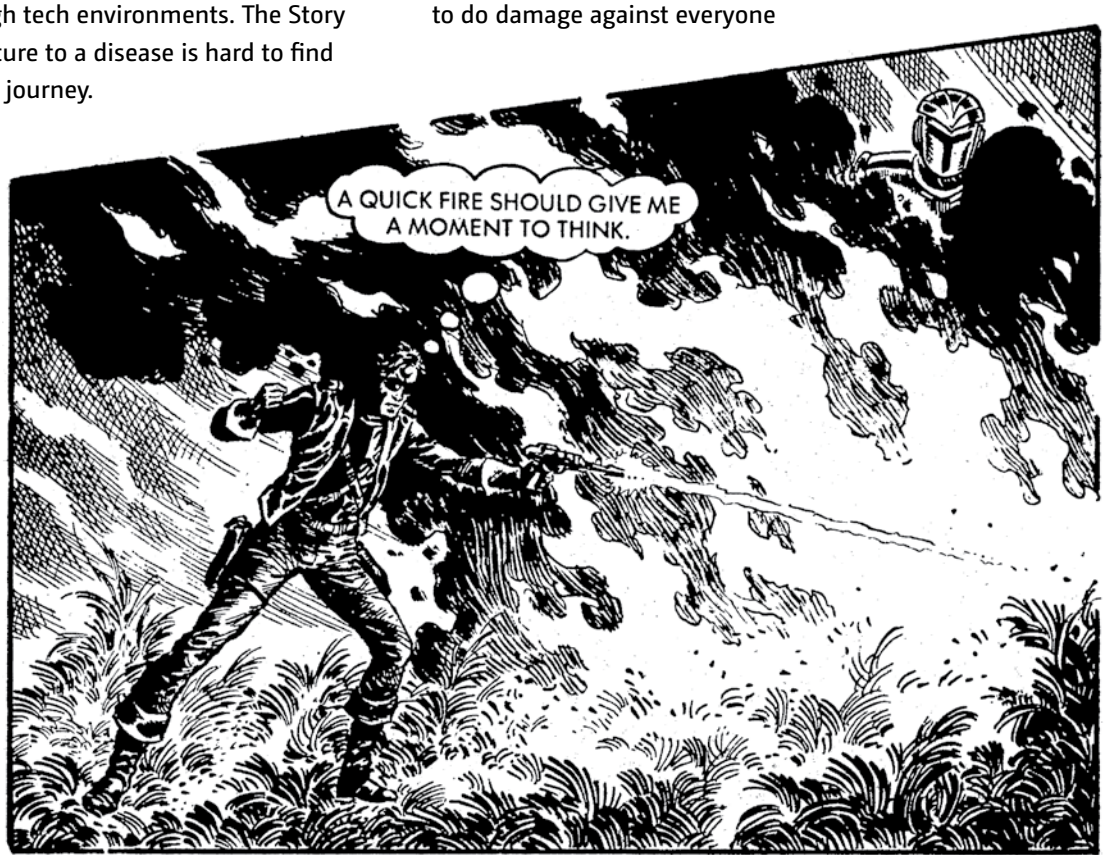
Fire Intensity

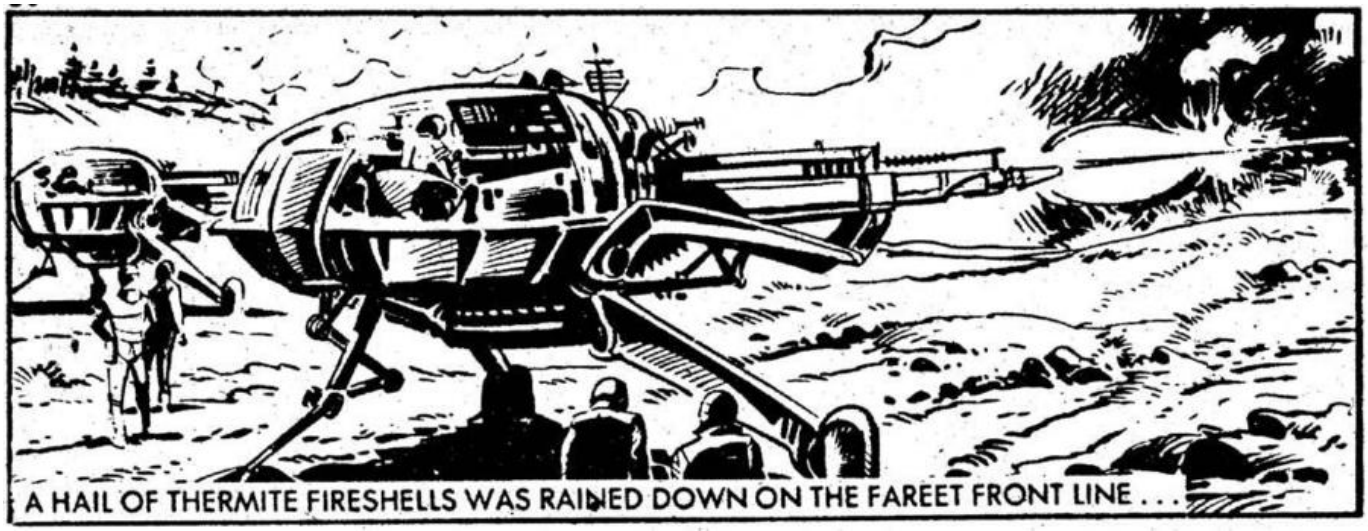
0: The building is on fire, but the fire can be avoided.
1: Almost everything is on fire, and the heat is pressing in on you in waves.
2: Everything is on fire, and the flames lick up near you.
3: Inferno. There may well be nowhere to run, you have only moments to live.

Some environments are fatiguing rather than damaging, such as trying to operate out in the hot desert sun. In those situations, it is more appropriate to have Endurance restrict other Skills, rather than any physical stress.

Explosions

Explosions and other area attacks have the potential to do damage against everyone





within their radius. They are deadly and can end a fight or alter a scenario significantly once used. Choose very carefully before allowing free and easy use of explosives in your game.

As discussed briefly on page 242, explosives have three ratings: complexity, area, and force. Here, we'll dig deeper into what these mean.

Complexity is the difficulty to disarm the bomb once the fuse or Timer has been triggered.

The **area** of an explosion determines how many zones the explosion will cover. An area of 1 means the explosion affects only one zone. An area of 2 means it affects one zone and **every zone adjacent to it**. And area of 3 expands it out to all zones adjacent to that. An area of 10 can pretty effectively cover a small town, and a 20 can cover a large city. This of course assumes that your zones are roughly the same size, that the explosion originates in the center of its zone, and so forth – feel free to tweak how things behave. There's nothing saying some area 2 explosions don't hit all of their adjacent zones, merely that they *could*.

The **force** of an explosion is a measure of how dangerous it is once it finally detonates. When an explosive detonates in a zone that a character is in, the force value is the difficulty of the free action Athletics test to take cover behind something solid. People unaware that a detonation is impending automatically fail this roll. If successful, the character takes a consequence (unless he generates some spin, in which case he makes a miraculous escape). If he fails, he is taken out immediately and is either badly injured or dead (though only minions should outright die in explosions).

The good news is that the force of an explosion drops by one for each zone it crosses, so characters in an adjacent zone have to deal with a force level that's 1 lower. If there is a border between the zones that would provide some cover (like a wall) it also reduces force by the value of the border. The force of an explosion drops to zero once it reaches its maximum radius indicated by the area.

In case that doesn't make it perfectly clear, the use of explosives in a fight is extremely, perhaps even insanely dangerous, but extremely potent. Setting and using explosives can usually be done using the Engineering Skill, but throwing an explosive into a fight is something else entirely. Before a character throws, the Story Teller should ask if the Timer is set as short, medium or long (for some explosives this is fixed, and not a choice of the player's). If the explosive is supposed to go off on impact, it will need a hair trigger (see page 81).

Throwing an explosive as an attack works in two stages. When a character throws an explosive, it's an attack using Weapons against a difficulty of Mediocre. If successful, the explosive lands in an appropriate zone (remember that thrown weapons have a range of one zone), and if not, it lands in the thrower's zone.

When the explosive lands, everyone within a zone covered by its area rolls Athletics against the attacker's Weapons result (from above) to get clear, should they so wish; if they gain *spin* on this defense roll, they may move one zone away from the zone the explosive is in by "diving clear" as a free action.

Anything short of spin has no effect – they'll have to hope that they get a turn before it goes off or, otherwise deal with a detonation scenario as

described above. The *thrower* has the option to reduce everyone's difficulty to dive clear (he may not want to make it too difficult for his allies to dive away), so long as that difficulty is not reduced below Mediocre.

If the thrower makes a bad throw – missing the Mediocre target entirely – then as noted, the explosive lands in the thrower's zone, with the difficulty for the thrower to dive free increased by one for each step he missed the target. The thrower does not have the option to reduce it, though in such a circumstance everyone else merely faces a Mediocre difficulty to dive clear.

After this initial "dive clear" check, the Story Teller makes a quick check before every individual action to see if the bomb explodes, by rolling 2 dice:

d6-d6	Short Timer	Medium Timer	Long Timer
+3 to +5	**Explode**	**Explode**	**Explode**
+1 to +2	**Explode**	**Explode**	Not Yet
+0	**Explode**	Not Yet	Not Yet
-1 to -2	Not Yet	Not Yet	Not Yet
-3 to -5	*Dud?*	*Dud?*	*Dud?*

On a Dud? result, make a mark on a piece of paper. The next time a Dud? result comes up, if a mark's already been made, the bomb is a dud or otherwise unable to explode. If the Story Teller chooses to make it an option, characters with appropriate Aspects may invoke them to demand that Story Teller re-roll the dice after revealing the result.

Each time the turn comes around to the person who set the timer again, a full exchange has passed, and the timer's length drops by one step – so if a long-timer explosive is out there for a full exchange, it's now a medium timer explosive, and so on. If it's a short timer explosive (pretty improbable that it lasted a full exchange), then it goes off right then and there.

Playing With Fire

When a character has an unexploded bomb in his zone and the opportunity to act, there are a few things he may try.

Pick It Up and Throw It. This uses the same rules for throwing the explosive that the original thrower used, but at a -1 penalty for taking the supplemental action of picking it up. This can become a deadly game of hot potato, and not one you want to get into with a character who has the Catch Stunt (see page 198).

Pick It Up and Disarm It. A character may use his own Engineering to disarm a bomb. This action is at -1 for the supplemental action of picking it up and is at a difficulty equal to the complexity of the explosive. It's possible to remove a detonator out of an explosive, but somewhat harder to stop a grenade once its been activated.

Leap on Top of It. Well, first off, this will pretty much kill the character dead. That said, it will improve the chances of everyone around him by reducing the force of the explosion by 3. If the character is

armored in some way, then the value of the armor is also subtracted from the force. Under particularly unusual circumstances, sets of Stunts or strange alien invulnerability powers, the character might be able to walk away from this, but really, players should be discouraged from such actions unless they're looking to start a new character. Fate points could be brought to bear, of course, to force a dud result once this is done, but the Story Teller should feel quite free to charge the player every single Fate point he has to pull it off (sort of like the Death Defiance Stunt, page 160, only temporary, and with more bite).

Run Away. Often the wisest course, using Athletics to sprint away from the bomb is not such a bad idea. The trick is that you need a chance to take a turn to be able to exercise this option. Players are often going to want to bring their friends along on their flight away from the scene of a bomb, so Story Teller's should make sure to review the rules on throwing, pushing, and carrying (page 225). While an individual will most always get away faster, the nature of a timer – getting checked on every action – may make a player prefer to get less distance, if he's helping a slower person get some distance too.

Bombs Outside of Combat

When a character encounters a bomb or explosive in a situation other than having it thrown by a maniac, there are a few things to expect. It is usually larger, heavier and more powerful, and it usually has an explicit trigger, such as a timer on a countdown or an event it will trigger in response to, like a tripwire or alarm.

Such bombs are inevitably powerful enough that characters in close proximity to them when they detonate have very little chance of survival. Thankfully, the role of such bombs is not to blow up but rather, to *threaten* to blow up. Usually such bombs are in important places so that if they go off, there will be serious consequences, even if the characters are unharmed.

Attempts to disarm one of these bombs will require one or more Engineering rolls against its complexity. A failure on any roll shouldn't result in the bomb exploding immediately; instead turn the bomb into one with a timer that starts counting down! Roll two dice: a minus result means it's become a short time, a zero result means a medium, and a plus result a long timer. Hopefully, this buys time enough for everyone to run like hell. More information on handling situations like this can be found under "Death Traps and Other Dooms" on page 442.

Explosives

Explosives should be introduced carefully and meditatively into your game. They can radically alter how a session will go. Make sure to read up on how they operate (page 239) before considering any purchase or provisioning of them in your game.

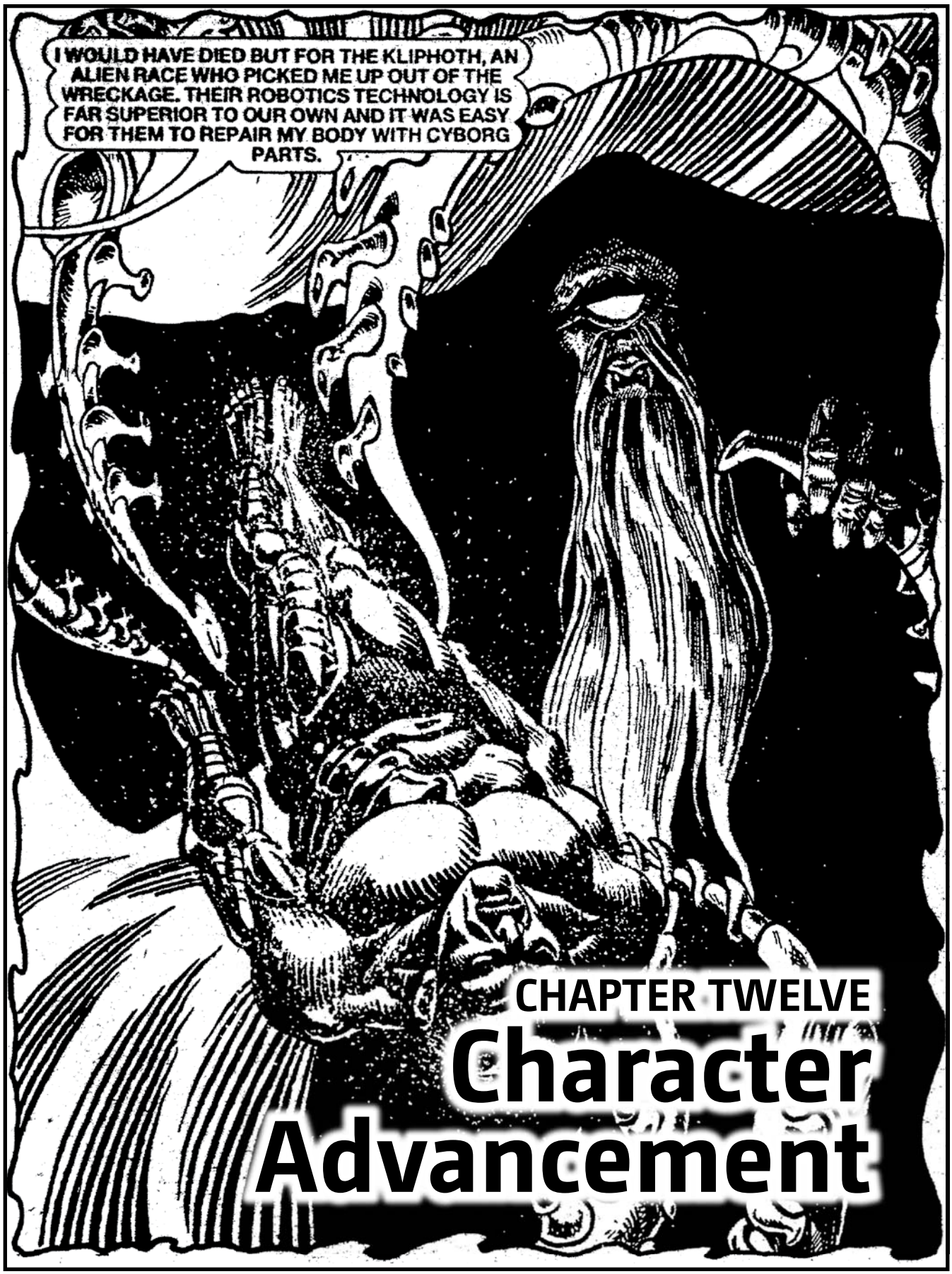
It's important to note that most any explosive which you can readily throw or use in combat is going to have an area of 1 zone. Larger explosives can be acquired, but they are usually reserved for villainous schemes.

Explosive	Force	Complexity
Area	Cost	Improvement
Military Grade	Legendary	Epic
2	Epic	
Home made	Superb	Superb
1	Great	
Mining Explosive	Fantastic	Fantastic
1	Superb	Hair Trigger
Plastic Explosive	Epic	Fantastic
2	Fantastic	Hair Trigger
Nuke	Legendary	Epic
2	Legendary x 2*	

Nukes are shown for Starship scale effects only

Bigger Bombs

Assume that the baseline bomb has an area of 1 zone, a force of Fantastic, a complexity of Good and cost of Good. Increasing area by one zone, or force or complexity by one step, increases the cost by one. These prices only reflect large, stationary bombs; mobility and portability will each cost extra.


I WOULD HAVE DIED BUT FOR THE KLIPHOTH, AN ALIEN RACE WHO PICKED ME UP OUT OF THE WRECKAGE. THEIR ROBOTICS TECHNOLOGY IS FAR SUPERIOR TO OUR OWN AND IT WAS EASY FOR THEM TO REPAIR MY BODY WITH CYBORG PARTS.

CHAPTER TWELVE
Character Advancement

BACK AT SYRAS, KURNIK SHOWED STAR KNIGHT SOMETHING THAT WOULD INCREASE THEIR SURVIVAL CHANCES.
IT'S AN OLD SYRAN ORNOCRAFT — RUNS ON STARLIGHT.
ALL WE NEED DO IS FLY IT.

Character Advancement

Adventures throw people into new and unusual situations, pushing them to (and beyond) the limits of their abilities. In order to survive, they need to get better and quicker, develop new ways of doing things or acquire vital knowledge to stay ahead of the opposition.

In ***Starblazer Adventures***, this is represented by Character Advancement.

At Session Start

At the start of every game session (apart from the first one), the Story Teller should award every player a Skill point. This lets you add more Skills to your character, at the cost of 1 point per level. Skill points can be saved up for more expensive Skills, but you must maintain the pyramid Skill structure of at least one more Skill than the tier above (see page 34).

If the other players agree, the Story Teller can award two Skill points to a player who did something spectacular in the last session. This could be for acting totally, and memorably, in character, or for relating an action in an incredibly cool or funny manner that left the room laughing. It rewards people for getting into the spirit of ***Starblazer Adventures.***

Each player should then be able to do **one** of the following in addition to gaining that Skill point:

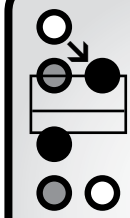
Replace an Aspect that's not working out (perhaps because the player didn't understand how they worked when he or she chose it).

~~Hounded by Space-Monkeys~~
➔ Two-Fisted Space Pilot

Change an Aspect – based on the character's experience, a 'Hounded by Space-Monkeys' aspect could become a 'Space-Monkey King'.

~~Hounded by Space-Monkeys~~
➔ Space-Monkey King

Swap two adjacent Skills in the Skill pyramid and/or **swap Average Skills with new ones**. For example you could swap Average Pilot with Fair Intimidation since you figure you've been using your Pilot Skill a lot more.



~~Intimidation: Fair~~
~~Pilot: Average~~
➔
Pilot: Fair
Intimidation: Average

OR

~~Rapport: Average~~
➔ Athletics: Average

Change one Stunt (which can't be a prerequisite for another of the character's existing Stunts).

~~Linguist [Academics]~~
➔ Defensive Driving [Drive]

At the End of an Adventure

At the **end** of an adventure where the players have resolved the story, and prior to the start of the next mission, each player should have the opportunity to do one of the following **instead** of the list above:

Add a Stunt as long as this does not reduce their Fate refresh to 0. Remember, Refresh **starts** at 10 minus the number of Stunts the character has.

Add an Aspect up to their maximum which is capped at their total Refresh plus Stunts. For example a character with 4 Stunts and a Refresh of 6 can have a maximum of 10 Aspects.

Add 1 to their maximum Refresh. For example a character who started with 10 Refresh and has 6 Stunts has a Refresh of 4, and a maximum of 10 Aspects. Raising their maximum Refresh to 11 would mean they get one more Fate point each game session and increase the cap for their Aspects or Stunts.

Adding Aspects

From the perspective of game rules, adding an Aspect gives the characters more opportunities to improve their performance and gain Fate points.

Looking past the rules, adding an Aspect allows a character to open up a new part of his story. The best Aspects picked up from advancement are those which are a sort of commentary on in-game experience. These Aspects tie characters into the ongoing storyline of the entire series and, as such, should be encouraged at every turn.

Maybe a new catch-phrase has shown up for the character ('I Hate It When I'm Right'); maybe he's made a new enemy or friend who deserves a nod ('Admiral Averley Must Be Stopped!'). If a consequence Aspect turned out to make play more entertaining, the character could "promote" it to full permanence – maybe changing it a little, turning a 'Lost Arm' into a 'Bionic Arm'.

It's the player's choice – if he wants to go to a place that doesn't tie back to prior events, that's fine too. Only one Aspect should be added in any given advancement and your game should cover a healthy number of sessions in between any increase in the number of Aspects the character gets.

Stunts – New Tricks For Old Space Dogs

Don't be afraid to be stingy about Stunts. Stunts are a potent path to carving out individuality, and if your play-group is big enough, you'll want to make sure everyone gets to keep their niche. As always, any Stunt a player picks should be reviewed and approved by the Story Teller.

Feel free to create new Stunts. New Stunts are a natural process for the game, and there are plenty of examples in the Stunts chapter to draw on as ideas for what does and doesn't work, along with guidelines on how to create them.

If a player wants a Stunt that's too powerful, come up with a few intermediate steps (Stunts) that he'll have to complete first in order to get it. Stunts with prerequisites are meant to do more than the usual – embrace this principle, and make use of it.

Players should be wary about collecting too many Stunts, it decreases their pool of Fate points which are a vital currency in surviving the rigours of Starblazer's space adventures.

Group Milestones

When the group of players achieves something very notable, has a shift in perspective, or if the Story Teller wants to give the players something to re-invigorate the game then you have what's called a Milestone. This benefits everyone in the group.

This could be one of the following:

- Everyone gets to spend 10 Skill points
- The group gets a new, bigger spaceship, facility or bonus to their organisation, or can spend 10 Skill points and add a Stunt or Aspect each to their ship or facility or organisation. The Story Teller should explain why this is happening for example an ally they just saved offers a total overhaul or a new ship as thanks.
- Open a bottle of champagne – hey, real world incentives work too!

Improving Starships

Starships can also be improved. For full details see Chapter 21, page 362.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Basic Scaling

Size Matters!

Objects, entities and phenomena encountered throughout the universe vary greatly in size; from small insects to huge engineered constructs sometimes larger than stars. In ***Starblazer Adventures***, everything your character will encounter will have an associated size factor (represented by a class number or Scale reference, see table to the right). This is used both to give the Story Teller and players an indication of something's size, and to define the ability of something to attack a target.

These Scales represent a range of sizes rather than a definitive size. For example, the Planetary Scale covers anything larger than the largest standard space station up to the size of a standard star. If there is a question concerning the Scale of something, the Story Teller should make a sensible decision based on the examples listed below.

Throughout these rules, Scale is quoted as **Scale (Class)**, for example, something falling into the class 8 Scale, will be described as "Planetary(8)".

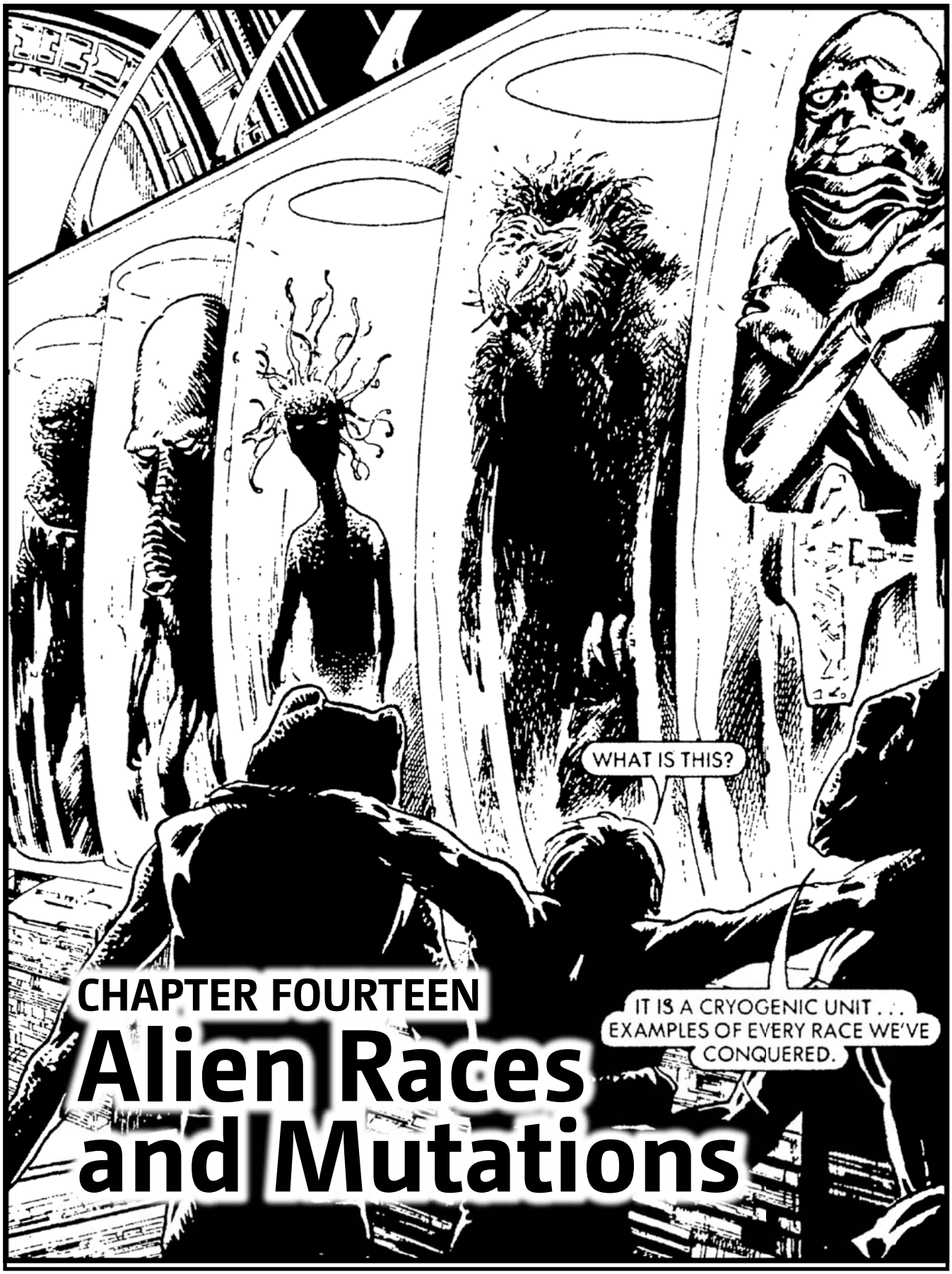
Combat-capable equipment (such as armed vehicles, Starships, heavy weapons platforms, personal weapons etc) is able to target anything that is no more than two Scale/class levels either side of itself, unless it has a Stunt or Aspect allowing it to attack further up or down the Scale.

For example, an Enormous (6) capital ship could have the Stunt 'orbital assault' or 'fire support' allowing it to hit targets on the ground such as Small (2) people and Medium (3) and Large (4) buildings or settlements on the ground. Similarly, a starfighter could have the Stunt 'Planet Buster' allowing it to attack very much larger targets such as a Colossal (7) space station or the Stunt 'Small Ancient Alien Superweapon' that allows the fighter to target a Star Relic (9) scale Dyson sphere. Right the way down to smaller objects, a Small (2) naval officer, Brandon Carter, can only attack up to Large (4) objects such as large buildings, a gunboat or a giant land creature. He'll need some decent weaponry to have a chance of denting them but at least he can try.

Space monsters can be any size so they also have a Scale value like everything else.

Class & Scale Summary

CLASS	SCALE	Examples
10	**Galactic**	Anything larger than a solar system (nebula, galaxy, cluster, super-cluster)
9	**Star Relic**	Huge astro-engineering projects (Dyson spheres, Ringworlds etc) / Solar systems, Vast life form – possibly genetically engineered to provide living space
8	**Planetary**	Planets / Large moons / Planet sized colony ships / Large fleet, large star faring life form like a space bourne version of the Sargasso Sea or a living intelligent world
7	**Colossal**	Large space stations / small moons / Smaller colony ships / Large cities / Small fleet, large star creatures,
6	**Enormous**	Vast Starships (large capital ships - carriers, battleships) / Small cities / Medium space stations / Squadron of fighters or wing of Large Starships, large star creatures
5	**Huge**	Large Starships (small to medium capital ships – cruisers, frigates, destroyers, large freighters) / Huge ground installations (star ports, military complexes, towns) / Small space stations, medium star creatures, large based lifeforms like an intelligent forest
4	**Large**	Small Starships (medium freighters, gunboats, patrol ships) / Large ground installations (housing / office blocks), small star creatures, giant size land creatures or assault vehicles
3	**Medium**	Small ground installations & houses / scouts, fighters, small freighters / Large vehicles (major surface ships, landcrawlers), large land creatures
2	**Small**	Small vehicles (cars, boats, military vehicles) / people (humans, monsters, larger creatures)
1	**Tiny**	Anything smaller than a human



CHAPTER FOURTEEN
Alien Races and Mutations

Alien Races & Mutations

If you want a player character to be an alien or mutant, it's simple. First of all, when the player picks Aspects choose one or more that deal with the alien race or reason for being mutated such as "Last Survivor of the Centauri Star Riders" or "Hated by the Elders of the Amarok" to reflect the character's status as an alien. For a mutant it could be something like, "Thermal Wars Mutant" or "Survivor of the Starship Centauri Disaster". Have a look at some of the alien races in Chapter 32 for ideas or make up your own in conjunction with the players.

The Source of the power!

You could use these rules to simulate all kinds of strange powers, mutations and abilities of alien races or ancient robots – maybe it's not psionics but strange ancient magic or unknown natural abilities? Could be it highly advanced nano-tech powering those energy absorbing powers? Perhaps its vastly superior alien technology that is so advanced it simply appears like magic? How characters have these powers is up to you as the Story Teller or the players to devise. If they come up with a cool reason, let them go with it.

Alien & Mutant Aspects

Players who want to create alien or mutant characters are encouraged to give them positive and negative Aspects that help describe why the character is so different, their background and what set's them apart from humans. Remember, the bonus of negative Aspects is that they earn the character Fate points when they are compelled. Some abilities require weaknesses to be taken in the form of Aspects but players should also consider other unusual alien or mutant Aspects that help them earn Fate points.

Sample Alien & Mutant Aspects

Must find a mate every 20 days
Hated by the Centaurians
The call of the brood mother is growing stronger!
Finds humans revolting
Weakened by Star Drive field
Humans must be protected!

Alien & Mutant Special Abilities

Choosing an Alien Race or Mutant Aspect allows a player to choose from a set of special abilities. Special abilities are divided in to Skills and Stunts, which can be chosen instead of normal character Skills and Stunts. Skills must be assigned a Skill level (such as Average +1 or Good +3) within the character's Skill pyramid and Stunts require that a character has the requisite Skill.

To take a Special ability Skill a character must also take a minor weakness as an Aspect (see weaknesses on page 262). These Weakness Aspects are in addition to the number of Aspects the character would normally have.

Choosing Alien and Mutant Skills and Stunts

These Skills and Stunts should always be chosen by the player, not the Story Teller, unless they encounter radiation exposure (see Radiation on page 238).

If characters gain Mutant Skills during an adventure then they start at Average (+1) and can be developed from there through character advancement (page 244).

Multiple Attacks

Some creatures may be able to make multiple attacks without penalties, but they should not have more than one attack of a type such as claws or jaw. This means it could have several instances of the Fists Skill if it took the Claws, Jaws, and Tail Stunts. The type of attack should be shown in [parenthesis]. For example the feisty Snapper that lives in the ancient Starship wrecks of the Sargasso Space Sea might have Average (+1) Fists [Jaws] and Average (+1) Fists [Claws]. It could not have more than one instance of Average (+1) Fists [Jaws]. Each attack Skill fills a separate Skill slot, in effect taking Fists a number of times.

The Story Teller should use common sense in ensuring creatures or aliens are not overpowered. For more deadly enemies try creating Threats using the guidance in Chapter 15 – Star Monsters & War Machines.

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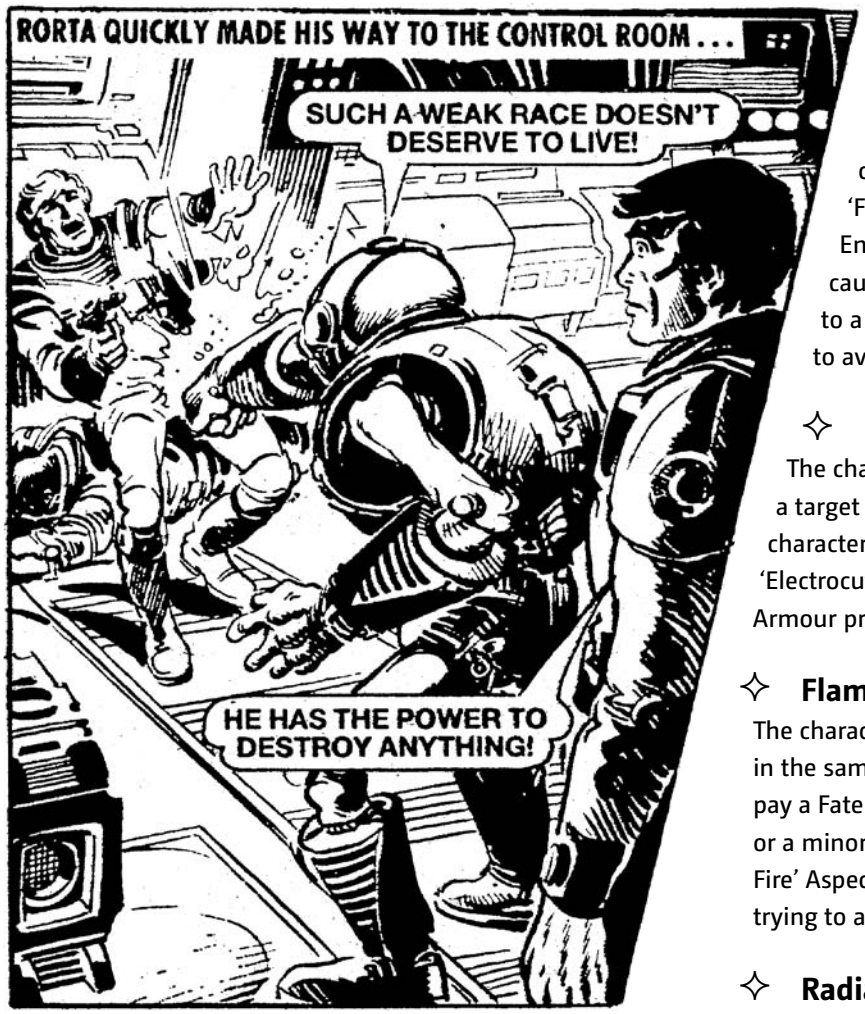

RORTA QUICKLY MADE HIS WAY TO THE CONTROL ROOM . . .
SUCH A WEAK RACE DOESN'T DESERVE TO LIVE!
HE HAS THE POWER TO DESTROY ANYTHING!

Special Ability Skills

Skills are described by the name of the Skill followed by [Skill]. Stunts are detailed under the relevant Skill with a ✧ prior to the name and followed by the requisite Skill. For example: ✧Sap [Absorb Energy] is a Stunt of the Absorb Energy Skill.

A further list of Stunts is provided detailing which general Skills are required in order to choose the Stunt.

Exude Energy [Skill]

The character can give off energy in a form that is harmful to other creatures or machines. It is up to the player or storyteller how the energy is exuded, for example, breath, rays from the fingers or beams from the eyes. The Skill reflects the intensity of the energy. The Stunt taken dictates what form the energy is in.

✧ Cold [Exude Energy]

The character can create a cloud of air that is below freezing around a target in the same zone. On a successful hit the character can also pay a Fate point and add an Aspect 'Frozen' on a target or a minor consequence. Energy shields provide no defence to stress caused. A character may add the 'Frozen' Aspect to a stationery object or target that is not trying to avoid the attack without paying a Fate point.

✧ Lightning [Exude Energy]

The character can send a stream of lighting against a target in the same zone. On a successful hit the character can pay a Fate point and add an Aspect 'Electrocuted' or a minor consequence to a target. Armour provides no defence to stress caused.

✧ Flames [Exude Energy]

The character can send a stream of fire against a target in the same zone. On a successful hit the character can pay a Fate point and add an Aspect 'On Fire' to a target or a minor consequence. A character may add the 'On Fire' Aspect to a stationery object or target that is not trying to avoid the attack without paying a Fate point.

✧ Radiation [Exude Energy]

The character can give off a blast of dangerous radiation which affects one target in the same Zone. There are two ways of using this, each of which costs a Fate point; as a radiation attack or to tag a target 'radiated', 'disease growth halted', etc. To use this for an attack make a Skill roll versus the target's Athletics to determine how powerful the radiation blast was to the target (see Radiation page 238). If the character fails, they take the difference in stress to themselves instead.

✧ Radiation Blast [Exude Energy]

Requires Radiation

This Stunt allows Radiation to affect all targets within the same zone with a single blast.

✧ Raw energy [Exude Energy]

The character can throw balls or beams of energy at targets in the same zone. Use the Skill to attack and any Shifts generated count as physical stress damage. The character can instead pay a Fate point to force a target to take a minor consequence. Energy shields

can help defend against this attack.

✧ Ranged Energy

Requires one other Exude Energy Stunt
The character may project an Exude Energy attack against a target up to a number of zones away equal to the Skill level.

Toxic [Skill]

The character creates toxins in their body. What kind of toxin is up to the players or storyteller, poison and acid are the most common. The Skill level reflects the intensity of the toxin. The Stunt taken dictates how the toxin is delivered.

✧ Toxic breath

The character can breathe a cloud of poison gas around a target in the same zone. On a successful hit the character can pay a Fate point to place the Aspect 'poisoned' on a target. Armour and Energy Shields provide no defence to stress caused.

An unprotected living target (not wearing a dangerous environment or space suit) who gains the Aspect 'Poisoned' must test their Endurance Skill versus the Skill level of the Poison Breath. If they succeed they are okay but if they fail they take 1 stress each turn from then on from the poisonous effects.

The character can also pay a Fate point to have the poison cloud persist in the zone. Any target that moves in to the zone must make an Endurance Skill test versus the original attack total or suffer the poisonous effect.

The Skill level of the Poison Breath is the difficulty to cure it with medical Stunts or medical kits and stop the poison damage.

✧ Toxic weapon

Must have Claws, Jaws or Tail abilities.
The character can add poison damage to a bite, claw or tail attack. On a successful attack, **pay a Fate point** and test the Skill against the defenders Endurance. Each subsequent turn until the target receives medical [Science Stunts] treatment from a character or medical kit the target takes a further 1 stress in poison damage.

✧ Toxic blood

The creature's blood burns! When physical stress is inflicted by an opponent in close combat whether from a weapon or gun, the creature can **pay a Fate point** and half the stress inflicted on it can be applied to the attacker as well.

✧ Spit toxin

The character can spit burning acid from its mouth. On a successful Fists or Weapon attack. Add +2 to the Stress inflicted on the target or pay a Fate point to tag the target with a 'Burnt' Aspect.

Romantic liaisons might be a little stressful with this! May not be used in zero gravity.

Absorb Energy [Skill]

The character is able to absorb energy from the environment around them, such as from powered equipment, sunlight, energy weapon's fire, artificial lighting and heat.

This can be used in an offensive or defensive way depending on the Stunts assigned.

At a very basic level the Skill allows the character to heal himself by drawing off energy from the local environment. The character makes a Skill roll with a difficulty of mediocre and if successful they can heal 1 stress providing the environment is warm, there is a piece of working technology to hand (which will malfunction during the round) or they are in the same zone as a source of strong artificial light or are in strong direct sunlight.

✧ Sap [Absorb Energy]

During a fist fight, the character weakens an opponent by sapping some of their energy. The opponent's Fist score is at -1 during the fight.

✧ Absorb Radiation [Absorb Energy]

The character is able to absorb radiation. The character may absorb up to their Skill level in radiation strength before they take any damage from radiation. After this they must sleep for 8 hours before they can use absorb more radiation.

✧ Absorb Light [Absorb Energy]

The character can literally suck the light out of a space. This allows the Skill to be used instead of the Stealth Skill, for example, "I darken myself, absorbing the light around me and fading into shadows", or to Maneuver ("I'm putting the Aspect 'Darkened' on this room")

✧ Absorb Heat [Absorb Energy]

Requires Absorb Light

The character is capable of absorbing heat at a very fast rate from the those they touch or the environment around them. A character can use the Skill in place of a Fists attack to damage targets, "I'm sucking the heat out of them", or as a manoeuvre to place Aspects on a target or a scene. For example on a successful roll they can pay a Fate point to put an Aspect such as 'Frostbitten Fingers' or 'Frozen Feet' on a target.

The character may survive in a burning hot environment such as a room which is on fire for a number of turns equal to their Skill level. In situations of extreme heat the character must pay a Fate point to survive each turn after which he must sleep for 8 hours before using this ability again.

✧ Energy Drain [Absorb Energy]

The character is able to drain energy very quickly from power sources such as batteries, beings of pure energy, power packs for weapons in someone's hand, doors, computers, robots and so on by, just by touching them. This can be used in place of a Fists attack to damage powered targets. On a successful hit, it causes System Stress to a powered target or they can pay a Fate point to place an Aspect on the target like 'Running Out of Juice'.

✧ Energy Boost [Absorb Energy]

Requires Raw Energy Stunt

The character can charge their energy attack from outside sources. If the character spends a complete exchange in contact with an energy source, they can spend a Fate point to add their Absorb Energy Skill to the stress that their energy attack causes so long as they attack in the next exchange.

✧ Absorb Energy Weapons [Absorb Energy]

Requires Energy Drain

The character can absorb energy weapons fire. Character may use the Skill to make a block against energy weapons fire. The character rolls their Athletics Skill and the Absorb Energy Skill and uses the greater total of the two as their blocking (see Blocking page 217) attempt. If the character is being shot at they can simply use the Skill instead of their Athletics Skill in defence (which may or not be enough to stop any stress from being taken. Alternatively they may pay a Fate point and absorb up to 4 points of Stress from one attack on themselves as a passive defence.

✧ Absorb Kinetic Weapons [Absorb Energy]

Requires Energy Drain

The character can absorb projectile weapons fire as well as the effect of large objects falling or being thrown on them. Character may use the Skill to make a block against the attack. The character rolls their Athletics Skill and the Absorb Energy Skill and uses the greater total of the two as their blocking attempt. If the character is being shot at they can simply use the Skill instead of their Athletics Skill in defence (which may or not be enough to stop any stress from being taken. Alternatively they may pay a Fate point and absorb up to 4 points of Stress from one attack on themselves as a passive defence.

✧ Life Drain [Energy Drain]

Requires Absorb Energy Weapons

The character can drain the very energy of life from a target. The character uses the Skill level to attack in place of Fists. On a successful hit, the character causes the Shifts in Stress to the target and removes up to the same amount of Stress on their own Stress track. They

can alternatively pay a Fate point to cause a minor consequence to the target and remove a minor consequence from themselves.

✧ Distance Drain [Absorb Energy}

Requires any two Absorb Energy Stunts
Where an Absorb Energy Stunt requires physical contact, this allows the Stunt to be used on any target in the same zone, not in physical contact.

✧ Mass Drain [Absorb Energy]

Requires Distance Drain plus Absorb Heat, Energy Drain or Life Drain
The character is able to drain energy from all targets in the same zone.

Ooze [Skill]

The character is able to alter their body into a near liquid form, allowing them to "flow" into/around/under things. The character must pay a Fate point to transform to near liquid state and a Fate point to transform back to human form. It takes one turn to transform to the near liquid state and another to transform back again. The character must take the minor Weakness to Cold. When they are in their liquid state treat it as a major Weakness.

In a liquid state the character may move, climb and descend vertical surfaces, pass through pipes or tiny gaps, carry very light items inside their liquid form (such as a key, ID card, etc) and can move through other non-corrosive liquids without problem. In a liquid state they could drown a sleeping target, short circuit a powered system (taking an attack of the highest Skill level of the system against their Endurance in the process via electrocution) and take simple actions like push a button. The liquid form can form eyes to see with whenever it desires.

Stretchy [Skill]

The character can stretch their body in to seemingly impossible shapes. They can use this to reach in to or squeeze through small gaps (nothing smaller than a key hole), under doors, wrap themselves around targets or reach impossibly high. It takes one turn to reform the body shape the character is most used to acting in having squeezed through small spaces. The character must take the Weakness to Cold.

Whereas Ooze allows the character to move in a near liquid form with little physical capability, this allows the character to maintain their physical body and apply force or manipulate things with their fingers whilst stretching in to unusual shapes. It costs a Fate point to transform but it is free to resume their original shape.

The Skill can be used to attack or make manoeuvres. In combat a character can make an attack with Stretchy instead of Fists. On a successful hit the character can pay a Fate point to add an Aspect to a target such as 'Tied up'.

Mimic [Skill]

The character can transform to 'look like' anything else with a similar body mass. This does not give them the attributes of what they are copying – for example they won't be as tough as a rock or as fast as a jungle cat. They can exactly duplicate anything they see, such as another character but the more complex the thing they are copying the easier it will be for an observer to spot that something is not right. To transform the character must pay a Fate point and it takes one round.

Anyone meeting the character in their mimicking state makes an Investigation Skill check versus the Mimic Skill level. The Mimic Skill level is modified as follows:

- Inanimate object (rock, tree, table): +1 Skill level
- Familiar Creature: -1 Skill level

- Unfamiliar creature: +1 Skill level
- Familiar Person: -3 Skill levels
- Unfamiliar Person: -2 Skill level

Fly [Skill]

The character can glide. The character may glide the Skill level in vertical or horizontal zones (or a combination thereof) as long as they start from a higher point.

✧ Flight [Fly]

The character really can fly, using wings, Psionics (see Psionic Skill), strange alien gas bags or strange anti-gravitational implants. The character can use Fly instead of Athletics for movement or manoeuvres. They can fly for a number of time periods (page 237) equal to their Fly or Endurance Skill (whichever is highest) before needing a few hours rest.

Barb Thrower [Skill]

The character is able to generate and fire bone splinters at a target (through the wrists, fingers, or any other suitable part of their anatomy). The Skill level is used in place of the Gun Skill. Barbs automatically regrow over a week of game time and are undetectable by normal means. It will never run out of ammo in a fight unless a Compel is placed on the weapon by the Story Teller, or the character chooses to use the Autofire weapon manoeuvre which doubles the damage incurred on a successful hit, but incurs the Out of Ammo Aspect.

Pheromones [Skill]

The character exudes powerful pheromones which can attract members of the opposite sex of the same species and be used to manipulate them.

Use the Skill level as an attack and the target defends using their Resolve Skill. The level of success indicates the level of influence over the target.
The target will follow reasonable suggestions for a number of turns equal to the difference between the attacker's and defender's results. Use your common sense with this, a target character is not going to jump off a cliff, shoot their friend or destroy a valuable artefact, but they might allow the character past a checkpoint, give them something useful, follow them

or help them in some simple way. After these turns are up the target starts to come to their senses and the attacker must roll again to maintain the effect. Character must choose any minor weakness.

General Special Ability Stunts

Alertness Stunts

✧ Active Sonar [Alertness]

The character is able to "ping" their surroundings, allowing them "see" around themselves in total darkness. The character receives +2 to Alertness Skill checks in the dark or under water.

✧ Eagle Eyes [Alertness]

The character has long distance vision. The Skill level is the distance in zones the character can make out small details such as reading print on a screen or see an item of jewellery. If the character pays a Fate point the Skill level is the distance in miles that the character can make out details on a human sized object (such as what colour hair, what colour clothes, what they are doing).

✧ Enhanced Hearing [Alertness]

The character can make out the tiniest of sounds at longer distances but is susceptible to loud noises close by. The Skill level is the distance in zones the character can make out low level sounds and listen to conversations. If the character pays a Fate point, the Skill level is the distance in miles away that the character can pick up the rumble of vehicles, equipment or large groups of people assuming there is no major sound of noise nearby. Characters trying to use Stealth to attack the character must first make a check using their Stealth Skill against the characters Alertness Skill not to be heard.

✧ Enhanced Vision [Alertness]

The character can see in Infrared (they can see heat or the lack of) or Low Light (residual light particles are enhanced). With Infrared the character can not see in daylight without special goggles, whilst characters with Low Light Vision are -2 to Alertness or Investigation Skill checks in daylight.

✧ Extra Sensory Digits [Alertness]

The characters fingers / tentacles / whatever, are extremely sensitive and able to feel very small details or sense minute movement in an old lock. They get a plus one to Burglary, Engineering or Science Skill checks when conducting delicate operations.

✧ Heightened Smell [Alertness]

The character can detect minute differences in smells, picking up trails, and the presence of certain substances long after they have been removed or that are hidden from view. The Investigation Skill level is the number of hours after the departure of the substances that the smell can still be picked up the character. The character gains a +1 in Alertness or Investigation Skill checks when related to smell.

✧ Sixth Sense [Alertness]

The character can pay a Fate point to add +4 to an Alertness Skill check when they are told they must make one or versus a known opponents Stealth Skill. This can help them avoid being surprised by opponents, traps or nature.

Athletics Stunts

✧ Fast [Athletics]

The character's metabolism is vastly speeded up but has a cost. During combat, a character may pay a Fate point and double their Athletic Skill. Doing so incurs a Minor physical consequence on the character due to the extreme energy burn.

✧ Gills [Athletics]

The character has gills and may breath underwater unaided. The character can swim underwater for a number of time periods (page 237) equivalent to their Athletics Skill or their Endurance Skill (whichever is highest). The character must take any minor weakness.

✧ Jump [Athletics]

The character can jump much further than normal. This provides a +2 bonus to the Athletics Skill to jump around the zones or over high obstacles. It can also be used to place an Aspect on the character such as 'On Higher Ground'. The difficulty is the distance in zones (including the target zone) the character is jumping.

B

✧ Lightning Fast [Athletics]

Requires Fast

The character is VERY fast. The character can spend a Fate point to add a combination of +4 to a Skill Check and / or a movement action. This could allow them to do something incredibly fast like catching an escaping vehicle, jump on a passing hover car or jumping out of the way of a ranged weapon attack. Usually this should be something that should be impossible for a human. Doing so incurs a Minor physical consequence due to the extreme energy burn, which will take effect at the end of the conflict.

The character can also move up to 1 zone as a free movement each round without incurring the Supplemental action penalty.

✧ Spider Feet [Athletics]

Requires Human Spider Stunt (page 151)

The character can climb up sheer walls, even climb along upside down. The skin exudes tiny hooks or has millions of tiny suckers that help them cling to any surface. Vertical surfaces are easy, and the character does not suffer from any modifiers for climbing a vertical surface, and if they pay a Fate point, do not need to make a Skill check. The character can attempt to climb an upside down horizontal surface with an Athletics Skill check and, if they pay a Fate point, negate any modifiers to the Skill test.

✧ Water Walking [Athletics]

The character is able to walk across matter in a liquid state. This includes normally dangerous liquid states although the character must be able to withstand the dangerous nature of the liquid (e.g. they could walk across lava but unless they are able to withstand the heat effects of the lava, they will still be affected by the lava). The character must pay a Fate point to start walking across the surface of the liquid. If at anytime they must take any other action except walking they must pay a further Fate point to keep waking or fall in to the liquid. The character must take a minor weakness.

Endurance Stunts

✧ Extreme Conditions [Endurance]

Pay a Fate point for the character to survive in extreme conditions such as heat, fire, cold or vacuum for one turn.

✧ Extreme Habitat [Endurance]

Requires Extreme Conditions

The creature or character lives in an extreme environment such as the corona of a star or vacuum and is not harmed by that environment.

✧ Hard Hide [Endurance]

The character has a thick skin which acts as a light armour against Fists and Weapons attacks only, absorbing the first point of stress from any such attack. Hard Hide may not be combined with Outer Shell. The character must choose any minor weakness.

✧ Outer Shell [Endurance]

The character has a thick shell which acts as an armour against fists, melee weapons and projectile weapons only. The first time this ability is taken it reduces stress from successful hits by 1, the second time by 2 and the third time which is the limit, by 3. At the same time, the character's Athletics Skill is penalized by 1 for each level of this Stunt purchased. The character must choose a minor weakness for each.

✧ Protection [Endurance]

Pay a Fate point to reduce total stress taken this exchange by 2 from any source of attack (except from weaknesses).

✧ Regeneration [Endurance]

The character heals at a faster rate than others. Treat healing times as three time periods (see time periods on page 237) faster for consequences.

During a scene, the character may pay a Fate point to start regenerating. As long as they remain stationery and are not being attacked they regain 1 stress per round however regeneration during a scene will not heal consequences.

✧ Quills [Endurance]

The characters skin contains thousands of tiny quills which can be raised as a defensive measure in close combat. The character rolls their Fists Skill in defence and takes a minimum of 1 stress. If the character wins the Fist Skill contest, they inflict the Shifts plus 2 to the attacker (unless they are wearing armour that would protect the wearer against lots of sharp pointy things!

Fists Stunts

✧ Claws [Fists]

The character has vicious claws capable of slashing damage. Add the Skill level as bonus stress to a successful Fists attack. The character must take one minor weakness or two minor weaknesses if they want to have retractable claws.

✧ Go for the Throat [Fists]

The character is very nimble and able to target soft-spots. The character can pay a Fate point to attack living targets up to 3 scales larger than it instead of the normal 2.

✧ Jaws [Fists]

The character has vicious teeth capable of slashing damage. Add the Skill level as bonus stress to a successful Fists attack. The character must take one minor weakness or two minor weaknesses if they want to have retractable sharp teeth.

✧ Tail [Fists]

The character has a powerful tail which can be used to attack. Add +1 to Fist attacks when using the character's tail, though this reduces Athletic tests by -1. This does not have a great degree of fine manipulation but it could, for example, pick up a cup but not press buttons on a key pad. The character must choose a minor weakness.

✧ Tentacles [Fists]

Each time this Stunt is chosen for the character, replace a limb with a tentacle. A character can attack as normal with each tentacle using the Fists Skill or can make one attack, gaining a +1 to the dice roll for each extra tentacle after the first. Each tentacle is capable of fine manipulation, attack and defence. For each instance of the ability the character must take a minor weakness.

Other Skills

✧ Deceptive [Stealth]

The creature is hard to target as it uses projected images or rapid teleportation. The character can pay a Fate point to force an opponent to re-roll an attack and take the new outcome.

✧ Halo of Destruction [Exude Energy or Toxic]

Pay a Fate point so that all targets in the same zone suffer the same attack.

✧ Horrific [Intimidation]

Requires Scary (page 169)

The character is so horrific that living beings want to run away. On a successful Intimidation attack against a target in the same zone, the character can pay a Fate point to force the target to move a number of zones away, equal to the Shifts generated. If targets are unable to run away they take an immediate minor psychological consequence. Other targets in the same zone are also attacked but with -2 to the Intimidation Skill level since they are not the focus of the attack.

✧ Oversized [Intimidation]

The character is much larger than normal characters (but still Scale 2) and can add +2 to intimidation Skill checks. The character can also add one to their Physical stress track. On the downside they lose -2 on Rapport Skill checks.

✧ Melanomorph [Survival]

The character is able to change his skin, hair colour and amount of facial hair at will but his facial structure remains the same. The character must pay a Fate point and the change takes one turn. Anyone who knows the character will have a -2 to Alertness to recognise them if not actively looking for that person whilst anyone actively searching for the character will have -1 to Investigation.

Thad Yaltis from the issue "Spaceroamer" is a good example of a Melanomorph.

✧ Supermind [Science or Engineering]

The characters mind is seriously over-clocked and ticks over at a highly accelerated rate allowing them to think extremely fast, and make calculations at speeds equivalent to a computer. The character can pay a Fate point to add +4 to a Science or Engineering Skill check for themselves. If they are assisting any character with the Science or Engineering Skill they can pay a Fate point and make a Science or Engineering Skill check against the Skill level of the character they want to assist. Any Shifts generated can be added as a one off bonus to the character they are assisting. The Science Skill can also be used in place of Alertness when in combat or Investigation when analyzing clues..

✧ Small [Stealth]

The character is unusually small and can fit in tight spaces and receives a bonus of +1 to Stealth Skill checks. Conversely the character gets a -1 penalty to Intimidation Skill checks due to their diminutive size.

Psionic Skills

In order to take a Psionic Skill a character must have an Aspect relating to psionics or mental powers. For example, 'Apprentice Mystic' or 'Terran Psionic Institute Agent'.

The individual Psionic Skill level is a measure of the character's psionics or mental strength. It is a combination of targets, the Skill power brought to bear and or distance in zones that the power can be used over.

For example a character with a Good (+3) Mind Control could affect one target 3 Zones away with a Mediocre (+0) Mind Control attempt or three targets in the same zone with an Average (+1) Mind Control attempt.

Characters who take Psionic Skills must take a minor weakness for each Psionic Skill chosen

Empathic Talent [Skill]

At its very basic level this gives the character a strong empathic talent. The character is able to sense emotions from lifeforms around them without any direct contact with them. This is not the ability to read minds, it just allows the character to read the emotions; happiness, anger, love, indifference, annoyance and such like of those around them. The character cannot impart emotions on others, only sense them.

The character pays a Fate point and may make a Skill roll to sense the emotions of lifeforms. This is a contest between the characters Empathic Talent Skill and the target lifeforms Resolve Skill. The difficulty should be modified as follows for alien lifeforms:

- Different race/creature but race or creature are known to the psionic: +1 to difficulty
- Different race or creature that have not been encountered before +3 to difficulty

The Shifts are a measure of how much depth of emotion is discovered. For example on a simple success (matching the difficulty) the Psionic discovers that the target is unhappy, whilst with 2 Shifts the psionics might discover the target is unhappy because of a death and is also angry. Alternatively a Story Teller could allow a number of Yes or No questions about the target based on the number of Shifts achieved with a free one for the initial success.

Mind Control [Skill]

Mind Control lets the character dominate weaker minds.

The mind controller can dominate "weaker" minds (bystanders, Extra's, minions, etc). To peel off minions from an opponent pay a Fate point and make a roll against the leader's resolve or leadership. Every Shift generated removes a minion and creates one of the same quality and type for the character. The character uses this to effectively peel off minions.

The character can also use Mind Control to gain minions on the fly. The character pays a Fate point

and rolls their Skill versus the collective Resolve of any bystanders (this should be determined by the Story Teller, usually Average (+1) for a handful of bystanders up to Legendary for numbers in the hundreds). Each Shift is a minion point the Mind Controller can use to buy minions (see Minions page 173).

✧ Dominate [Mind Control]

This allows a Psionic to attempt to control a named enemy (i.e. not a minion or bystander) through a struggle of wills.

This must be done through a mental conflict (using the Composure track). The Psionic pays a Fate point and uses their Skill to attack and the target uses Resolve to resist the mind control. During the attack the target is at a -3 penalty to do any physical act against the controller. The target is however at no penalty (during their action) to use verbal actions to affect the composure track of the mind controller. For example, Intimidate: "You...will...pay...for...this... Algol!", Deceit: "I am now under your complete control, Master", Rapport: "Can't we talk about this?".

If the target is taken out through the mental conflict they are now under the complete mental control of the attacker and remain so whilst the Psionic maintains their concentration. During this time the Psionic is at -1 to all actions. If they take any consequences they immediately lose their concentration and the control over the target. The target reverts to a state of having no composure stress and a Major mental consequence.

✧ Mental Shield [Mind Control]

The secret to mind control is learning first to control your own mind. The character has learnt how to raise mental barriers to attacks and how to protect themselves from aggressive mental Psionics. This negates the -3 penalty to take physical actions when attacked by a Psionic with the Dominate Stunt.

The character with Mental Shield can use Mind Control in a blocking manoeuvre.

Mental Bolt [Skill]

The character is able to project an image of pain into the mind of a target. This can cause actual pain and the defending character uses Resolve to resist. On a successful hit the Shifts incur Composure damage. The character can alternatively pay a Fate point on a successful hit to put a "Stunned" Aspect on a target which can then be tagged for bonuses.

✧ Mental Blast [Mental Bolt]

On a successful hit with a Mental Bolt the character can pay a Fate point to cause a minor mental consequence instead of stress, the consequence being something more severe like "Staggered" or "Floored".

Postcognition [Skill]

The character is able to sense recent events in their immediate area. The difficulty should be affected by the length of time since events took place and the area over which events happened. Successful Shifts should translate in to greater accuracy or the Story Teller could allow the Psionic a number of questions with Yes or No answers.

Telekinesis [Skill]

The character is able to manipulate objects using their mind. This gives the character the same attributes as Might but with the ability to use it at a distance. The character must pay a Fate point each time they use Telekinesis to affect a different object. The shifts generated determines the number of turns the character can manipulate the object. Manipulating items in zero gravity makes the difficulty one level less. See Might on page 125 for more details.

✧ Feather Touch [Telekinesis]

Using Telekinesis is often just brute force. Feather Touch allows the delicate handling of items such as turning a key in a lock, typing on a keyboard or writing with a pen. The character must pay a Fate point to spend a turn doing this.

✧ Move Self [Telekinesis]

The character can move himself but requires the Fly Skill to maneuver otherwise any movement attempts are made at a Skill level of Mediocre.

✧ Move Heavy Loads [Telekinesis]

If the character is trying to move an object heavier than that shown on the Lifting Things table they make the attempt as usual. On a success they can then spend as many Fate points as they wish which multiplies the result by the Fate points spent. For example if a Psionic with Great (+4) Telekinesis and

SOL POSSESSED PSYCHO-KINETIC POWERS. WITH HIS MIND HE WAS ABLE TO MOVE AND AFFECT MATTER . . . LIKE A PUPPET ON STRINGS.
IT'S LIKE AN OCTOPUS — TOO MANY ARMS TO HANDLE. CAN'T HOLD IT OFF FOREVER . . .
SOL
DESTROY — ERADICATE THREAT TO STATION . . .

Move Heavy Loads succeeded at moving something heavier (Superb – 400 lbs) and then spent 2 Fate points this would mean they could move a load of 800lbs (2 x 400).

Telepathy [Skill]

The character is able to silently exchange thoughts with others, effectively communicating silently. This allows the character to use Rapport, Empathy and Deceit over a distance, silently. The Skill level of Telepathy is a restriction, so if the Telepathy Skill is less than the Skill being used then that Skill is at for -1.

For friendly communication the distance in zones between the character and the target plus any intervening barrier values (such as doors, walls etc) is the difficulty.

The character can only communicate this way with beings of the same race. To communicate with alien minds the character must pay a Fate point and use the same method to check if the communication link is achieved. Once a link has achieved communication can continue until either of the character's moves zones in which case the telepathic character must once again roll to make contact.

✧ Probe [Telepathy]

The character can read the minds of targets in the same zone by paying a Fate point and making a Skill check against the target's Resolve. This does not alert the target unless the character rolls Spin in defence in which case they realise their mind is being probed and any extra Shifts mean they have a better idea of who

[*Chapter 14: Alien Races and Mutations*]▷

is doing the probing! If they are in the same room as the Telepath and there is no one else present they will know straight away if they get Spin.

The Telepath can probe minds further away with each zone and barrier point between them and the target increasing the difficulty by one.

On a success, each Shift indicates one item of information that the Telepath has found out. The Story Teller should assume that secret information, fears or weaknesses should cost two or three Shifts. The Story Teller could give a Yes or No answer about the target for each Shift if they wish.

Other Abilities

Obviously, any players coming up with their own ideas for mutations etc may suggest them to the Story Teller. Use the abilities listed above as a guide to developing further alien or mutant Stunts.

The Downside

Remember that the alien or mutant must pick at least one minor weakness for every Skill picked from these lists unless the specific weakness is detailed. Some but not all Stunts also have a cost in weaknesses.

Mutations or alien abilities should be obvious, enhanced vision comes with eerily glowing eyes, tentacles, are well, you know, gross! Certain abilities may not be popular with some people you meet. Whilst advanced cultures generally embrace change and species of all kinds mix happily, others may react with fear, revulsion or hatred towards those who are different.

Weaknesses

Weakness are stated as Aspects allowing them to be tagged as normal through maneuvers and provide opportunities for characters to find unique ways of dealing with monsters, aliens or mutant threats.

Weaknesses can be Minor (causing double damage from exposure or damage) or Major (causing an instant consequence from exposure or damage). Only Star Monsters and other giant threats have Major weaknesses.

Minor Weaknesses

If a character or monster is exposed to an element or substance that it has a minor weakness to through an attack or a maneuver it takes double the stress inflicted by the attack or the listed stress from exposure to the element.

Minor weaknesses are hidden Aspects and as such have a concealment difficulty to discover. See page 237 on setting Assessment difficulties for this. First the weak spots must be assessed (page 98) and then the weakness discovered by passing a Skill check with the relevant Skill which should be noted, for example. Minor Weakness Fire: Good Science Skill check.

Major Weakness

If a monster or other giant threat is exposed to an element or substance it has a major weakness to through an attack or a maneuver it takes an automatic consequence. To exploit the major weakness the attackers must be able to tag the specific Aspect and have the

relevant element, substance or weapon available to use in an attack or offensive maneuver. A successful attack on the target automatically inflicts a consequence. The only way for the target to avoid it is to block the attack.

Major weakness are also hidden Aspects but for characters should be the subject of an adventure to discover and involve danger, travel, Fate point use, numerous Skill checks and much more to discover the final secret. See the example Threats for examples of the types of danger that guard their secrets.

Example Weaknesses

Minor weaknesses cause the target to take double the stress inflicted from a successful hit or they take the stress inflicted by exposure listed below. Major weaknesses cause an instant consequence on a successful hit or exposure.

Elements Exposure

- Water – double stress inflicted by a water based weapon or 2 stress each turn from contact
- Fire – double stress inflicted by a fire based weapon or 2 stress each turn from contact
- Cold - double stress inflicted by a cold based weapon or 2 stress each turn from contact
- Gravity – double stress inflicted by a gravity based weapon or 2 stress each turn from contact (within planetary field)
- Zero-Gravity – weakness to zero gravity. Takes 2 stress each turn in zero-gravity.
- Light – double stress inflicted by a light based weapon or 2 stress each turn from contact
- Air – weakness to Earth standard air. Takes 2 stress each turn from contact.
- Wind – Very strong storm winds disperse the creature's body (only for creatures which float or are made of air carried matter) and causes 2 stress each turn from contact.

Substance Exposure

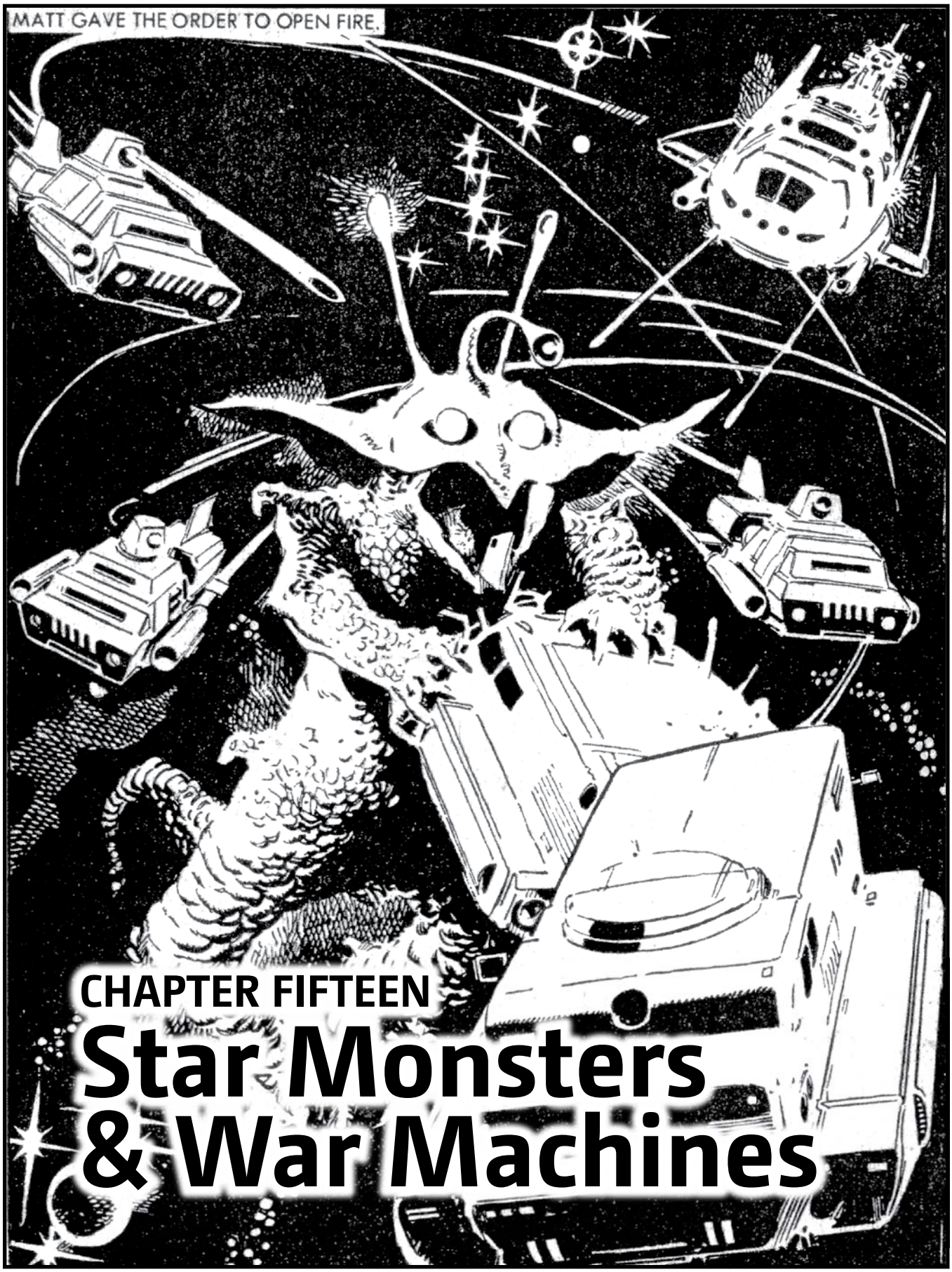
- X poison from Y – The [insert name of leaf, sap, juice] from planet [insert name] will cause 2 stress per turn from contact.
- X Material – exposure to [insert name of material] will cause 2 stress each turn from contact. For example Steel, Bronze, Silver, Gold, Copper, etc.
- Radioactivity – weakness to radiation. Take the radiations power Skill level (see page 238) in stress damage from contact.
- Germs, Biological agent – exposure to the stated agent or germs will cause 2 stress each turn from contact.

Force Exposure

- Projectile Weapons
- Energy Weapon
- 'Other' Unusual Weapon
- Electricity (2 stress each turn from contact)
- Sonic Weapon

Limitations

- No fine manipulation – The creature is unable to carry out any fine manipulation – this includes pressing small buttons, operating delicate machinery or small equipment, computers, and hand held equipment. -2 to all Skill checks requiring fine manipulation
- Slower than normal – The creature or Threat always loses initiative unless it can surprise the opponent. It can only act once every other round.
- Small – The creature has 1 less physical and composure (or structural and system) stress boxes and can only take two consequences instead of three. .
- Weak – The character or Threat receives -2 to Might Skill checks. Mechanical threats should instead reduce maximum Structural stress by 2.
- Ponderous – The character or Threat cannot maneuver quickly. Receives a -2 to Manoeuvre (mechanical Threats) or Athletic (characters, living Threats) Skill checks
- Scary (characters only) - The character instills fear or revulsion in those around them. Receives a -2 to Rapport and Empathy Skill checks when dealing with members of its own species.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Star Monsters & War Machines

Star Monsters & War Machines

The universe of Starblazer is full of vast creatures, automated Star Relics, ancient war worlds, giant robots and powerful evil beings trapped by long dead races, and all of them with some inscrutable reason for waging war against civilisation.

These larger than normal **Threats** have Aspects describing their strange purposes, backgrounds, weaknesses, strengths and other features as usual. Threats also have Skills, Stunts or **Monstrous** Special Abilities.

Creating Threats

Okay how big a Threat do you want to create?

Is it Tiny Scale (1) or Small Scale (2)?

Create the Threat as you would an alien (Chapter 14) or robot (Chapter 17).

Is it Medium Scale (3) or above?

Follow this process:

- Pick a Scale (see Threat Scale table below) – How big is the Threat (or each part of the Threat) compared to everything else in the universe?
- The Threat table explains how many Stress, Skills, Aspects and Monstrous Special Abilities the Threat can have.
  - » Mechanical Threats choose from Starship Skills and Stunts, living Threats choose character based Skills and Stunts. Galactic Scale (10) Threats choose Star Empire Skills (see page 283). You don't have to pick every Skill – just the ones that are most relevant.
  - » Mechanical and living Threats may also choose from standard (page 250) Special Ability Skills in Chapter 14 as part of their Skill selection (in some cases at the cost of taking a minor weakness).
  - » Threats can take the listed number of Monstrous (page 273) Special Abilities.
  - » Threats may take further Special Abilities at the cost of 1 major weakness for each Monstrous Special Ability and the stated minor weaknesses for standard Special Ability Skills or Stunts.
- The Threat can have as many Stunts as it likes (chosen from character, Starship or Special Abilities) at the cost of reducing its Fate refresh by 1 for each Stunt taken. Fate Refresh can never go below 1.
  - » If you are creating a boss creature which will be surrounded by Minions choose the Minion Stunt as many times as required (see Minions Stunt page 173). Minions for a Threat should be appropriately scaled – we recommend at least two scales smaller than the Threat itself.
- The Threat starts with 10 **Fate Points** minus the total number of Stunts (including any Special Ability Stunts). These are used to power the Threat's monstrous Special Abilities and Threats use them just like characters but with a few extra options (see below)
- Pick Weaknesses based on chosen Special Abilities, see page 262 and state these as Aspects. All Threats must have a minimum of one Major or two Minor Weaknesses (see page 262). These can be taken as a result of choosing Special Abilities or extra monstrous Special Abilities. Weakness Aspects are in addition to the Threat's normal Aspects.
  - » Pick remaining Aspects (see suggestions below), the Threat has the listed number of Aspects.
- Living Threats have 5 Physical and 5 Composure stress, Mechanical Threats have 5 Structural and 5 System stress. Both can take up to three consequences chosen from Minor (-2 stress), Major (-4 stress), Severe (-6 stress), Extreme (-8 stress) but each type of Consequence can only be taken once. Some Stunts, Skills and Special Abilities allow more stress to be taken.
- Determine the Threat's Weak Spot if it has multiple body parts, each with their own Stress tracks. This is the body part that will cause the Threat to die or de-activate if it takes an Extreme Consequence. For example you destroyed the brain of the creature or the memory core of the giant robot.

Threat Scale Table

Scale	Physical Stress	Composure or System Stress	Typical Skills Pyramid	Skill Points	Aspects	Monstrous Special Abilities
Medium(3) Small ground installations & houses / scouts, fighters, small freighters / Large vehicles (major surface ships, landcrawlers), large land creatures	5	5	**F F** **A A A**	7	3	1
Large(4) Small Starships (medium freighters, gunboats, patrol ships) / Large ground installations (housing/office blocks), small star creatures, giant size land creatures or assault vehicles	5	5	**G** **F F** **A A A**	10	4	2
Huge(5) Large Starships (small to medium capital ships – cruisers, frigates, destroyers, large freighters) / Huge ground installations (star ports, military complexes, towns) / Small space stations, medium star creatures, large land based lifeforms like an intelligent forest	5	5	**G G** **F F F** **A A A A**	16	5	2
Enormous(6) Vast Starships (large capital ships - carriers, battleships) / Small cities / Medium space stations / Squadron of fighters or wing of Large Starships, large star creatures	5	5	**Gt** **G G** **F F F** **A A A A**	20	6	2
Colossal(7) Large space stations / small moons / Smaller colony ships / Large cities / Small fleet, moon size star creatures,	5	5	**S** **Gt Gt** **G G G** **F F F F** **A A A A A**	35	7	3
Planetary (8) Planets / Large moons / Planet sized colony ships / Large fleet, large star faring life form like a space borne version of the Sargasso Sea or a living intelligent world	5	5	**Ft** **S S** **Gt Gt Gt** **G G G G** **F F F F F** **A A A A A A**	56	8	3
Star Relic (9) Huge astro-engineering projects (Dyson spheres, Ringworlds etc) / Solar systems, Vast life form – possibly genetically engineered to provide living space	5	5	**E** **Ft Ft** **S S S** **Gt Gt Gt Gt** **G G G G G** **F F F F F F** **A A A A A A A**	85	9	3
Galactic (10) Anything larger than a solar system (nebula, galaxy, cluster, supercluster)	5	5	**L** **E E** **Ft Ft Ft** **S S S S** **Gt Gt Gt Gt Gt** **G G G G G G** **F F F F F F F** **A A A A A A A A**	120	10	4

Skills Key: A – Average F – Fair G – Good Gt – Great S – Superb Ft-Fantastic E – Epic L - Legendary

There are various ways of treating Threats in Starblazer, depending on the type of Threat and level of detail you would like. Here's how to figure out which version to use.

Stress & Consequences – Is the Threat SO big that each 'part' of it could be a Threat in its own right, each part having its own stress track, Consequences and its own attack? For example a vast creature crashing through a city, with massive claws, legs that can crush a tank and a mouth that can swallow a ship? See A Sum of Parts below. You're looking at several big battles here.

Is the Threat a core 'boss' Threat with a host of minions with their own Skill level? For example a vicious hive queen and her scuttling minions or a vast war machine and its army of robot guards? See Here Comes The Boss below. Perhaps better for a host of smaller fights leading up to the finale.

Would you like to run the encounter like an elaborate chase scene? For example like a Star Squid's tentacles pursuing a fleeing Star Patrol ship through the ancient wrecks of the Sargasso space sea? See The Big Chase below. This is good for those stressful, dramatic escapes!

Do you want a swarm of creatures? This threat is made up of a myriad of small creatures that are insignificant compared to the whole. See The Swarm below.

Remember that this a guide to help you create some challenging, cool and unusual large scale opponents. Treat it as a tool kit of ideas – follow the various suggestions here or pick the bits you like best. You'll soon realise you can scale Threats to how bad you want them to be for the character's health!

A Sum of Parts

You know how some video games force you to destroy bits of the creature one at a time? You could create each of the creature's parts as Threats in their own right.

For example tentacles, arms and necks could all be created with separate Stress tracks and attacks but all sharing the same central Skills and Aspects. Facing them all together would require the characters get a Taken Out result on each body part, however this also

allows the characters to defeat the Threat piecemeal (whilst facing multiple attacks) or possibly tie up parts of the creature whilst the chosen characters confront its head and weak spot.

Each body part should have the same 5 Physical Stress but only one should have the 5 Composure Stress, where its brain or control system are situated. This is the Threat's Weak Spot – if this body part is Taken Out, the whole Threat is defeated, unless it has the 'No Weak Spot' Monstrous Special Ability.

Each part should, however be able to take up to three Consequences before it is taken out and destroyed or become so damaged as to be useless to the main Threat.

Here Comes The Boss!

Rather than have a number of Threats making up a larger Threat, have just one 'boss' Threat surrounded by a host of minions. You might want to review the rules on using Minions on page 226. This is scaled

The Interloper

Sum of Parts Version

Let's look at a creature through the different suggested ways of creating a Threat. Our threat is the ***Interloper***, a creature from the depths of the sea, stirred up by drilling for the intercontinental monorail tunnel system!

Design notes:

- This is a big slow moving creature from the depths, its life in the pressurised depths of the sea means its skin is very hard (Immune),
- It can tear ships or streets apart with its mouth (Massive Bite Unusual Attack),
- It can topple buildings (Monstrous Might) but is Ponderous due to its giant size and has a weakness to fire.
- The creature's allocation of 6 Skills are used up on attacks – one for each body part and notice the creative descriptions for the character Skill 'Fists' to represent its stomping and smashing attacks.
- Only the head has a Composure stress track as this is where the creature's brain is. So one way to defeat it could be some kind of mental attack or perhaps it could be scared by (a large amount of) fire in to retreating towards a trap.

Large Scale (4) Sum of Parts Threat

Body Part	Physical	Composure	Attacks
Left Leg	□□□□□		Stamp Fair (+2)
Right Leg	□□□□□		Stamp Fair (+2)
Head/Mouth	□□□□□	□□□□□	
Left Arm	□□□□□		Smash Avg (+1)
Right Arm	□□□□□		Smash Avg (+1)
Tail	□□□□□		Smash Avg (+1)

All other natural Skills default to Mediocre (as appropriate) – including Alertness and Athletics, however the creature may not use any Knowledge based Skills or any others requiring use of technology – basically use your common sense in this!

Aspects:

- Swallow a whole ship (Unusual Attack)
- It's still alive!
- Must feed my young
- Pain makes me angry!
- The Fire burns!! (Fire Weakness)
- Where'd they go? (Ponderous Weakness)

Monstrous Special Abilities:

- Unusual Attack – Good (+3) Massive Bite (Serious Consequence)
- Monstrous Might
- Immune

Major Weakness – Weakness to Fire
Major Weakness – Ponderous
Weak Spot: Head/Mouth

Fate Points: 10
Consequences: Each body part may take 3 Consequences as normal (no more than one Minor, one Major, one Severe or one Extreme).

down from 'A Sum of Parts' as the minions will be easier to defeat than the separate creature's body parts above.

Okay imagine that Giant Space Hydra as a "boss creature" with 8 minions (one for each head). So the minions heads would have, for example, Average (+1) Attacks and can attack in groups as with the minion rules (page 226), with the size of the group giving the attack bonus. The boss creature therefore can't be damaged until its minion heads have been destroyed.

Another example, if you don't want to use the Starship rules for large scale Starship encounters you could create a giant space fortress with minions as the fortress's massive weapon systems or turrets.

Want the players to face a more formidable fleet without delving in to the rules for fleets? Easy, the enemy's flagship is surrounded by escort ships detailed as minions: Cruisers as Good (+3) quality, Destroyers as Fair (+2) quality, and Frigates or fighter wings as Average (+1) quality.

Large Scale (4) **Here Comes the Boss** Threat

Physical Stress **Composure Stress**

□□□□□ □□□□□

Skills:

Good (+3) Unusual Attack – Massive Bite (Serious Consequence)

Fair (+2) Stomp, Stomp

Average (+1) Smash, Smash, Tail Smash

All other Skills default to Mediocre (as appropriate) – including Alertness and Athletics.

Stunts:

- Minion x 3. Total of 12 advances spent on Strength in Numbers giving the Interloper 36 young who are Bite Average (+1) and have one physical Stress each. The young are determined to be

Aspects:

- Swallow a whole ship (Unusual Attack)
- It's still alive!
- Must feed my young
- Pain makes me angry!
- The Fire burns!! (Fire Weakness)
- Where'd they go? (Ponderous Weakness)

Monstrous Special Abilities:

- Unusual Attack – Good (+3) Massive Bite (Serious Consequence)
- Monstrous Might
- Immune to Projectile Weapons

Major Weakness – Weakness to Fire

Major Weakness – Ponderous

Fate Points: 7 (3 Stunts taken)

Consequences: 3 Consequences as normal (no more than one Minor, one Major, one Severe or one Extreme).

The Interloper

Here Comes The Boss Version

A creature from the depths of the sea, stirred up by drilling for the intercontinental monorail tunnel system, it is determined to ruin everyone's day.

Design notes:

- This is a big slow moving creature from the depths, its life in the pressurised depths of the sea means its skin is very hard (Immune), it can tear ships or streets apart with its mouth (Massive Bite Unusual Attack), it can topple buildings (Monstrous Might) but is Ponderous due to its giant size and has a weakness to fire.
- This creature has a lot less Stress to absorb attacks however it makes up for it with its mass of hungry young just waiting to snap at the characters.

Minions:

Small Scale (2) Interloper Young

Average (+1) Bite

All other Skills default to Mediocre (as appropriate).

Stress

□□□□□ □□□□□

□□□□□ □□□□□

□□□□□ □□□□□

□□□□□ □

Remember each group of ten or more Minions receives a +4 bonus to attack (see page 226).

If one characters goes head to head with the main 'boss' part of the Threat, the boss attaches to a huge group of minions, with all the extra Stress tracks and group bonuses that entails, likely getting many exchanges of group-enhanced attacks before the hero gets very far through the minion stress tracks.

If several characters face the creature, others can work on tying up attacks from minion groups representing ships, weapons, giant arms or tentacles. While the main hero faces the Boss attached to a much smaller minion group bonus, increasing the possibility that he or she can blow through the minions and start scoring hits on the Boss before it can shuffle its minions to re-protect the villain.

Minions cannot be of the same Scale of the Threat and must be one or two Scales smaller than the boss. This means the elements of the Threat represented by the minions can be attacked by smaller enemies and can attack smaller targets. The 'boss' or head of the Threat should contain any unusual weapon attacks.

Killer Insect Cloud

Medium Scale (3) Swarm Threat

Aspects:

- Stinging insects
- Prey on the living
- The buzzing!

Weaknesses:

- Major Weakness to sonic attacks (major)
- Carried on the breeze (minor weakness to wind)

Skills:

Fair (+2) Fly, Athletics

Stunt: Flight

Monstrous special ability: Poison Attack

Physical Stress □□□□□
Composure Stress □□□□□
Fate Points: 7

Attacks inflict physical stress, extreme weather causes composure stress that breaks up the swarm without actually harming the creatures.

Design Notes:

- Notice how we've just given the swarm just two Skills for simplicity – Fly and Athletics.
- It could have three Average (+1) Skills but we're going to assume any other relevant Skill required such as Alertness or Fists (normal bites) will default to Average.
- Whilst minions would normally get a bonus for strength in numbers this swarm is so big that we're reflecting the attack through a Monstrous special ability instead, which is an automatic hit.

The Big Chase

Think of it something like a *chase*. As you defeat each tentacle, arm or squadron of ships, a new 'tentacles' come in to take their place. Once you get towards the end, the "big pursuer" comes in (the head!) for the final showdown. See Chase Scenes on page 112 for how to run this.

You can create each part of the creature with a Stress Track, Skills & Special Abilities – see above.

The Swarm

The swarm is treated as a single entity of the Scale of the swarm. The Skills, Stunts & Special Abilities are for the swarm as a whole, essentially a group of minions without a boss. To defeat the swarm the characters will need to inflict enough composure stress to break the swarm up into harmless creatures using the wind, or destroy enough of them to reduce its strength.

For More...

See the Chapter 33, Monsters, Minions, and Mad Scientists on page 564 for more examples of Threats from the pages of Starblazer.

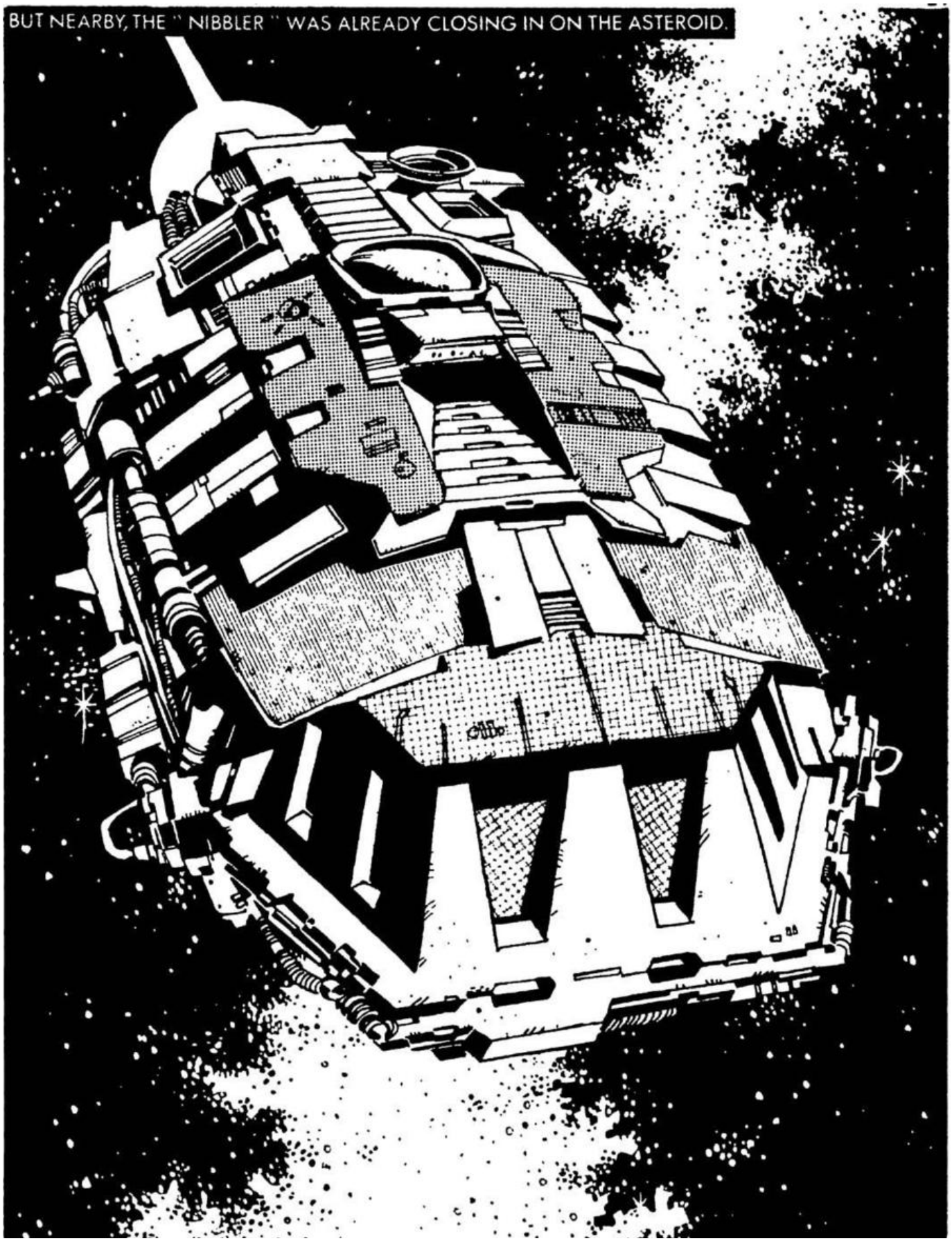
Simpler Threats

You don't have to go to the trouble of creating a creature from scratch just change one of the existing Threats or monsters in Chapter 33 or use one of these simple methods.

Broad Strokes

For simplicity, you do not need to choose all the Skills for a Threat. Just pick the most relevant Skills (perhaps just a monstrous Special Ability or unusual attack and default any other Skills to the next level below or simply pick them as you need them.

For example, I need a quick creature to harass my players so I come up with the Mountain Talon of Regius IV. I choose a Medium scale (3) creature and


BUT NEARBY, THE " NIBBLER " WAS ALREADY CLOSING IN ON THE ASTEROID.

Sample Aspects

Born In The Fires Of The Sun
Drifting The Ether Alone
Separated From Its Family
Protecting Its Children
Searching For Food
Its Creator Must Die
Humans Must Die
Must Reach Earth
Just Leave Me Alone
I Follow The Queen—Obey The Queen!
Destroy! Destroy!
I Must Find The Answer
I Want One Of Everything!
Born Of Hatred, Reprogrammed For Peace!
Nothing Can Stop Me!
Designed For Peace, Built For War!
Millennia Old
Last Of The Ancients
Pinnacle Of Evil

imagine a flying lizard-like creature that raids colonies for tasty human meat. At this scale the threat has two Skills at Fair (+2) and three at Average (+1) so I just pick the two obvious Skills Fists and Fly to be Fair and decide to pick what else it might have at Average (+1) later on.

As it needs to actually fly I choose the Flight Stunt on page 254 and the Stunts Claws (page 257) to represent its nasty talons. I choose Horror as its monstrous ability since it's been scaring the colonists and then just need to pick two minor weaknesses for its two Special Ability Stunts – let's choose Fire and Radioactivity.

Threats on the Fly

If you don't even have time for the broad strokes method above just pick the Threat's Monstrous Special Abilities, a major weakness, a few Aspects and you're good to go. Let's say I need a large scale (4) threat - a massive creature to attack the new colony on the farming world of Taurus. I pick Plasma Blast as its Monstrous Special Ability, and a major weakness to Fire. With no Stunts it's got 10 Fate points, 5 physical and 5 composure Stress. I figure a couple of Aspects like 'Giant legs will crush you' and 'Born in the depths of ocean' will do for now.

Threat Scale

As with everything else, a Threat can only interact with targets that are up to two levels either side of it on the Scale chart, unless it has a Special Ability allowing it to target something smaller or larger (such as 'Oversized' on page 259 or it has Minions of a smaller Scale (see Here Comes The Boss page 268). Remember this doesn't stop a vast Threat from attacking the buildings or cities that the characters

are in hiding in. As has been suggest Threat's Minions should be at least two Scales smaller than the Threat itself.

The **Unusual Attack** Special Ability affects everything in the target zone but will only actually damage targets up to two scales larger (all Scale below are affected). Targets in the zone bigger than this will be un-affected unless the Threat has an appropriate Stunt or Special Ability.

Fate Points

Threats start with a number of Fate points equal to ten minus the number of Stunts the Threat has (including Special Ability Stunts). Threats can pay a Fate point to:

- Power a Stunt or a standard or Monstrous Special Abilities that requires a Fate point to activate.
- Invoke or Tag an Aspect to get +2 to Effort or a re-roll
- Compel an opponent's Aspect
- Avoid a compel

Threats earn Fate points for being compelled

The refresh for Threat Fate points is 10 minus the total number of Stunts it has (including Special Ability Stunts). The refresh level can never go below 1. Unlike Fate points for characters and Ships, all Threat Fate points refresh **between scenes** unless there is a reason why the Threat would not have an opportunity to rest, such as in continuous pursuit or a dangerous environment.

The only time a Threat may not spend Fate points is if their monstrous weakness is being compelled —for example a Giant Robot with the monstrous weakness to Energy Weapons may not use Fate points to aid a defensive manoeuvre such as Block or to invoke one of its Aspects in defence against an Energy Weapon attack.

Monstrous Special Abilities

Monstrous Special Abilities are powered by checking off a Fate point. Here are some example monstrous Special Abilities for Threats. Feel free to create more powers for your vast alien war machines or ship eating aliens.

Fiery Blast: Pay a Fate point to breathe fire. Causes 4 stress to all targets in same or adjacent zone. Energy shields provide no defence. The Threat can pay an additional Fate point to tag all targets with the 'On Fire' Aspect.

Cold Blast: Pay a Fate point to breathe cold. Causes 4 stress to all targets in same or adjacent zone. Energy shields provide no defence. The Threat can pay an additional Fate point to tag all targets with the 'Freezing' Aspect.

Lightning Blast: Pay a Fate point to breathe lightning. Causes 4 stress to all targets in same or adjacent zone. Armour provides no defence. The Threat can pay an additional Fate point to tag all targets with the 'Electrocuted' Aspect.

Plasma Blast: Pay a Fate point to breathe super charged plasma. Causes 4 stress to all targets in same or adjacent zone, bypassing armour. The Threat can pay an additional Fate point to tag all targets with the 'Burnt' Aspect.

Poison Attack: Pay a Fate point to bite, breathe or emit poison from the Threat. Causes 4 stress to all targets in same or adjacent zone. Shields and armour provide no defence. All unprotected living targets must test Endurance versus a Superb (+5) difficulty or take an immediate 'Poisoned' consequence.

Body Attack: Pay a Fate point to stomp, kick, bite or use other relevant body parts of the Threat against a target. Causes 4 stress to all targets in same or adjacent zone. The Threat can pay an additional Fate point to tag all targets with the 'Shocked' Aspect

Acid Blast: Pay a Fate point to breathe streams of acid. Causes 4 stress to all targets in same or adjacent zone. Energy shields provide no defence. The Threat can pay an additional Fate point to tag all targets with the 'Burnt' Aspect.

Immune: Pay a Fate point to negate stress from all attacks (except weaknesses) for this turn only.

Gargantuan: This opponent is hard to gang up on. For each Fate point paid, decreases the number of opponents by one for purposes of determining 'Superior Numbers', for the duration of the scene. The Threat can also attack opponents up to 3 Scales larger for the duration of the scene.

Destroy Everything: Pay a Fate point so that both the target zone and all adjacent zones suffer the same effects in an area attack (such as Fiery Breath or Plasma Breath. Can not be used for Unusual Attacks.

Heal: During its turn the Threat can pay a Fate point to instantly regain 2 Stress.

Horror: The threat exudes a horrific aura against all targets in a zone. Any opponents with Resolve (individuals on land), Leadership (Captain of a Starship or army unit)), Ship System Skill (no Ship Captain detailed) less than the Threats Intimidation Skill must move 4 zones away or take an immediate psychological consequence (includes all crew of Starships). All opponents with higher Skills are attacked by the Threat's Intimidation Skill and suffer the same if the attack is successful.

Extreme Conditions: Pay a Fate point for the Threat to survive in extreme conditions such as heat, fire, cold or vacuum for the duration of the scene. The

Story Teller should pick one extreme condition per instance of this Special Ability.

Unusual Attacks: Pay a Fate point to use a Threat's Unusual Attack. If taken twice as a Special Ability this becomes an Unthinkable Attack. See below for more information on Unusual and Unthinkable Attacks. The Threat must create an Aspect describing the weapon or attack and assign the Threat a Skill describing the power of the weapon. Threats may only have one Unusual or one Unthinkable attack. The Threat must have a major weakness for each instance of this monstrous Special Ability (i.e. one for an Unusual Attack, two major weaknesses for an Unthinkable Attack).

Monstrous Might: Pay a Fate point to manipulate an object one or two Scales less than itself. For example a Planetary Scale (8) Threat could move a Colossal Scale (7) moon out of orbit and heading towards its planet's surface. With a difference in Scale of 1 this takes 'a few hours'. With a difference of 2 Scales this takes 'a few minutes ' (see time increments on page 237).

No Weak Spot: The creature's intelligence is spread throughout its body in a strange web of neurostrands. As a result it has no Weak spot that can be destroyed to defeat the creature. Creatures with no weak spot must have two major weaknesses as a minimum.

Threat Attacks

A Threat can choose from standard Special Abilities and Stunts described in Chapter 14 to have claws, jaws and tentacles based on the Fists Skill or the Monstrous Special Ability Body, Unusual or Unthinkable attacks. A Threat can attack once for each attack it has listed. If the Threat is broken in to body parts then once the body part is 'taken out' any attacks associated with those body parts can no longer be used.

Unusual & Unthinkable Attacks

As well as having normal attacks, Threats can have a monstrous Special Ability called Unusual or Unthinkable Attack such as a giant fusion maw for literally eating ships, a ferocious Sun Cannon that can obliterate a whole world, or a massive computer virus attack that could reprogram every machine on a planet into killers.

Unusual attacks inflict an instant Serious consequence on anything in the target zone if the attack is successful. Unthinkable attacks destroy or 'take out' everything in the target zone if the attack is Successful

Unusual and Unthinkable Attacks should have an Aspect describing the weapon or attack and must be assigned to one of the Threat Skills. For example an Enormous Scale (6) Star Plasma Creature could have an Aspect: 'Sun Cannon of the Varda' which is an Unusual Attack: Great (+4) Sun Cannon (Serious)

It gets to make this attack once every three rounds (make this longer if you are also giving it other attacks) during which it is getting in to position, powering up, chewing, etc.

To attack a target Zone the Threat must pay a Fate point and place an Aspect on the target Zone such as 'Powering up for Mega Death', 'Fusion Maw Opening' or 'Energy Flux Building'. On the next turn, anything still in the target Zone is affected by the attack

For example every third turn the Star Plasma Creature can place a 'powering up' Aspect over a zone. If targets in the zone do not leave the zone the Sun Cannon will inflict an instant Serious consequence on everything remaining in the zone.

Unusual Attacks and Unthinkable attacks affect everything in the target zone of the same scale as the Threat and below. Anything up to two scales larger is attacked by the Threat's Unusual or Unthinkable attack Skill versus the target's Manoeuvre, Energy Shield or Armour Skill, whichever is higher. If it is stationery target such as a world, the target's Scale is used as the difficulty for the attack.

For example if the Scale 6 Star Plasma Creature targeted a planet with its Great (+4) Sun Cannon the difficulty would be Legendary (+8) which is the scale of the world. The creature would need to roll +4 or greater to cause an Instant Serious consequence to the world such as 'global volcanic eruptions'.

On a success the attacks effect is applied – an Instant Serious Consequence if it's an Unusual weapon, Taken Out if it is an Unthinkable weapon.

Remember, the Threat must manoeuvre first to put an Aspect like 'Standing over you', 'Takes a deep breath', 'Sun Beam coming on line' on a zone where it wants to attack. The characters, ships or other occupants of that zone then have a round to manoeuvre to try to take the creature down, stop it firing, chomping or breathing before everyone and everything in the targeted zone gets hit with the effects of the weapon - instant Serious consequence or Taken Out.

THE SLARN HAD THE ULTIMATE WAR MACHINE BUILT . . . THEY BECAME THE MACHINE MASTERS.

"Keep Going We're Not Clear Yet!"

The effects of Unusual, Unthinkable and major Special Ability stress attacks can carry over in to adjacent zones. However effects are reduced with each extra zone and point of barrier value as follows;

- **Taken Out effects** are reduced by 1 Scale (starting from the Threat's scale) and to an Extreme Consequence in adjacent Zones and reduced again by one level with each Zone further away. For example an Unthinkable Fusion Maw's Blast from a Scale 8 War Machine would be reduced to an Extreme consequence affecting Scale 7 targets or below in adjacent Zones, then Severe Consequences affecting Scale 6 targets or below in the next Zones further away and so on.
- **Instant Consequences** are reduced by 1 Scale (starting from the Threat's Scale) and 1 level of Consequence. For example the Scale 6 Star Plasma Creature's Sun Cannon with a Major instant Consequence is reduced to affecting everything Scale 5 and below and only deals a Severe Consequence in the next Zone, scale 4 and Major Consequence in the next Zone, and so on.
- **Stress attacks** are reduced by 1 and minus any barrier rating for each Zone further away from the blast zone (see page 342 for barrier effects). So for example if Brandon Carter is hiding behind a barrier 2 wall two Zones away from a Giant Robot Foot which inflicts 8 Stress on the target zone then he will suffer only 4 Stress from the shockwave of the robot's foot hitting the ground (8 Stress -2 for the two Zones distance, -2 for the barrier leaving just 4 Stress).

Defending against Threat attacks

Characters have several options against these kinds of attacks. They can try to remove the Aspect, get the hell away from the zone (if the Aspect is on a zone) or make a block manoeuvre to reduce the damage. For example:

- Brandon Carter screams and shouts to get the attention of the Giant Robot away from Astraade the fighter pilot. He succeeds in a Rapport versus Resolve Skill test with the Robot and removes the 'Giant Foot' Aspect.
- Brandon Carter flies as far away as he can from the Star Plasma Creature in his patrol ship. He gets three shifts on his Starship Pilot Skill roll, which means his ship is 3 zones from the blast and avoids taking any damage when the creature lets loose.
- Astraade Menin, at the helm of the Scale 6 Fi-Sci Battleship 'Earthstar' rams in to the Star Plasma creature (see Blocking page 217) to block its attack on Brandon's squadron of patrol ships.

Confronting a Threat

Defeating a threat like a great star creature or massive war world should not be a single conflict but a Starblazer Legend itself. This should take place over several scenarios and mini games as the players go in search of clues to its weaknesses (which can simply be used against it or tagged) and other means to defeat the creature such as obtaining aid in fighting it.

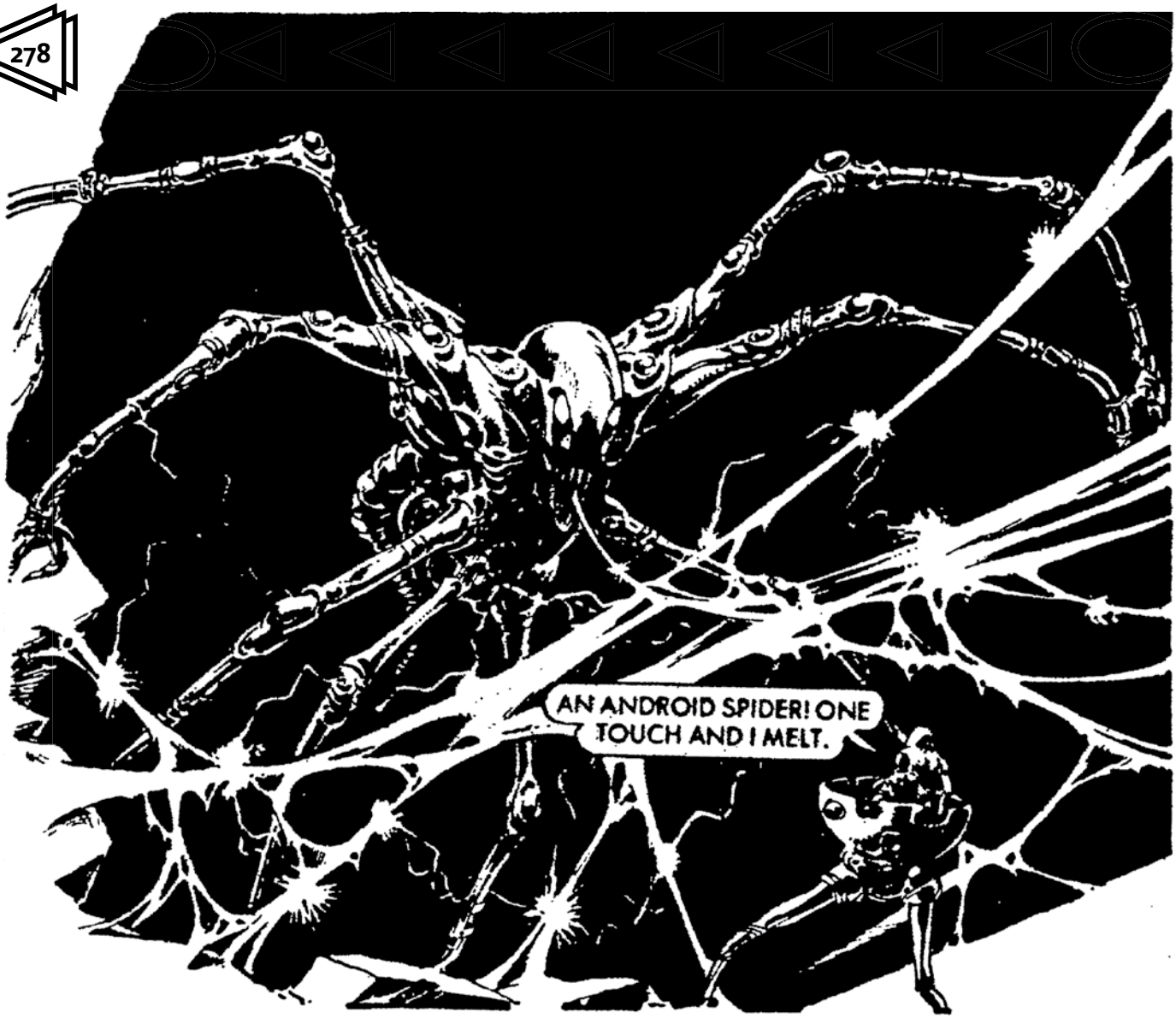
Here are some examples of how to hide the knowledge of a Threat's weaknesses from the players;

- It lost in the ancient records of a ruined city
- Only one member of the race that remembers the last battle with the creature is left alive, in hiding on another side of the galaxy, and guess what? He REALLY hates humans.
- Aboard a wrecked Starship which is host to a vicious hive of alien creatures
- Stored in the computer that is now worshiped by an evil cult
- The information is on a tablet broken in to four parts and scattered to the corners of the galaxy.
- Lost somewhere in the wreckage of the Sargasso Star Sea
- Engraved in ancient code on the wall of the secret temple.
- Hidden in the Galactic Library now controlled by the Cult of Yesterday

Since Threats can only be attacked by weapons of scales two levels either side of them (unless the attackers have certain Stunts, Aspects or are aware of a weakness) the characters will also need to secure the necessary weapons or ships to attack the Threat, however that's not the only way...

Ways of damaging a Threat

Use the terrain to hurt it. Since a building, mountain, asteroid, planet or Sun also has a large scale, throwing or pushing the Threat against it using a Manoeuvre, will make it take stress. The same can be said of space



stations, comets, planetary atmospheres...the stars are indeed the limit!

To do this you will need an object of the same scale or up to two scales either side of the Threat to use its manoeuvre to push the Threat in the terrain. This becomes a conflict of Manoeuvre vs Might or Manoeuvre. If the character succeeds, Shifts are converted in to stress.

Alternatively an explosive force could be used to fling the Threat in to a star or world's gravitational field. See page 62 for explosives. If the Threat fails its Athletics Skill check or a Manoeuvre Skill check to avoid the force of the explosion it is flung in to the desired target. Of course securing sufficient explosive weaponry to do this could be an adventure in its own right.

The character can research the Threats weaknesses to allow them to tag it for bonuses. See Weaknesses on page 262.

Deal with each part of the Threat one stage at a time as detailed above. Assign different characters and allies to each part of the Threat that can attack in order to reduce its overall effect.

The character could prove to a creature that they're too much trouble to fight. Through a social conflict (researching the creature's motives prior to this) a character could convince the Threat that eating their ship or world is not so beneficial to its cause. Using Rapport or Intimidation a vast alien Starship could be persuaded to take a route around an insignificant world if there is a perceived value in doing so or if the effort expended in destroying the planet is inefficient in its logic (that they just managed to decode).

Make a concerted effort: A lot of characters or Starships can coordinate to launch an attack at the same time. For example if 10 or more Star Patrol ships

of the same Scale (or no less than 2 scales below) co-ordinated to fight the Star Plasma creature they would get a +4 for group size for one attack roll. See page 226.

Compulsions

A Threat gets +1 to its Refresh for labeling an Aspect as a Compulsion.

Simply, the Threat may not refuse a compel against any compulsion Aspects. For example angering a violent creature, or convincing a 'mad ships computer' it is being attacked forces it to act.

For example if we make the Aspect: Must Feed My Young of the Interloper Threat we described earlier, a compulsion it will get a bonus Fate point on top of its Refresh and it therefore may not refuse a compulsion to ensure its young are fed – something the characters can use to distract it.

Some Threats may have very simple or no Social or Mental sides, which could be useful for defeating them. Large planet based or star creatures may have low intelligence so for example it might allow the characters to intimidate them using fire or bright lights. Giant robots might be fooled into falling from cliffs, giant AI run Starships might be compelled to follow their core programming.

Compulsions can also cover Minor or Major Weakness where attackers want to use the weakness against the Threat in a way other than directly trying to damage it.

For example the Interloper has Mediocre Skills in all but its attacks and has a Weakness to Fire. If the fire weakness is discovered by the characters and is a compulsion Aspect, it could easily be scared by a sufficient amount of fire in to retreating away from the city it's attacking. Now just which city block are they going to burn down?

Argh! It's multiplying!

Now if you really want to have some fun let's assume those evil aliens swarming through the characters' starship are really, really alien. That means the characters don't know what effect their weapons will have on them, right? Those fabulous energy weapons they just purchased might have the opposite effect.

If you'd like to give the characters a hard time figuring out just exactly how to kill those pesky creatures, roll on the table below every time they attack and successfully hit with a totally new weapon (i.e. Fists, Projectile weapons, psionics, energy weapons, blade weapons, crushing weapons, fire extinguishers, flamethrowers, hairsprays….). If you get the same result as another weapon's effect simply move up or down the table in the same direction to the next effect that has not yet been rolled. For example if you've rolled a +1 move up to +2, if you've rolled a -3 move down to -4. If you've rolled the last effect (-5 or +5) and have already selected this, start from the other end of the table. Whatever effect you roll for a certain type of weapon becomes that weapon's effect against all of the same type of aliens.

Random Weapon effects

-5

-4 The creature mutates and splits in to two identical creatures, both will have the same Skills, Special Abilities and Aspects but will also have the same stress damage and Consequences if any have been inflicted on it.

-3 The creature is immune to this type of weapon

-2 The creature doubles in size and can take one more consequence

-1 The creature mutates and gets one Special Ability (see page 250) The creature suffers any weakness stated

0 The creature takes normal damage from this type of weapon

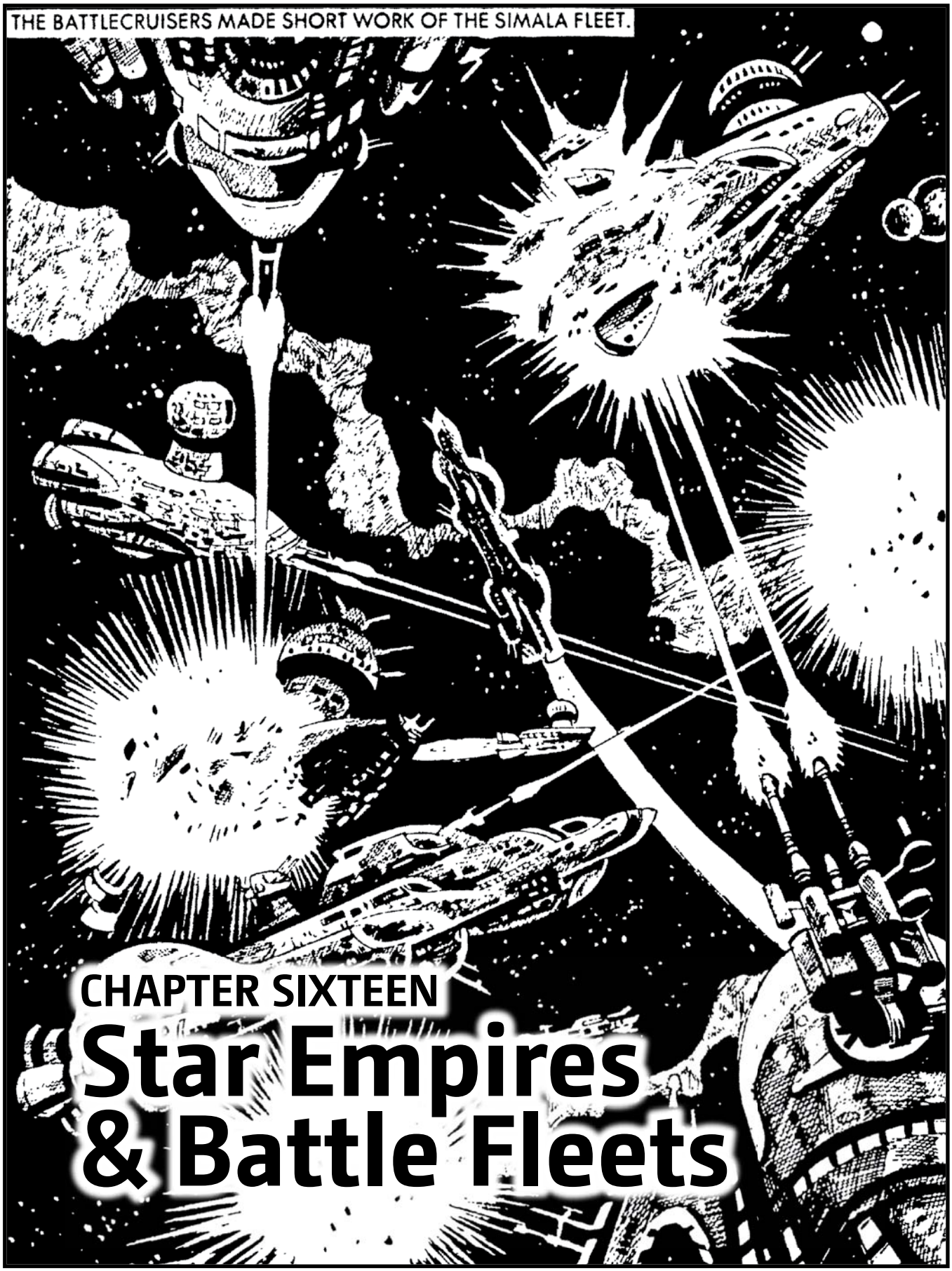
+1 The creature mutates and loses one Special Ability or if it has no Special Abilities it takes a further +2 stress on top of any inflicted

+2 The creature has a minor weakness to this type of weapon and takes double stress damage

+3 The creature is tagged with a 'Stunned' Aspect which can be tagged by the characters for bonuses. The Aspect is removed the first time the creature takes Stress.

+4

+5 The creature has a major weakness to this type of weapon and automatically takes a consequence



CHAPTER SIXTEEN
Star Empires & Battle Fleets

Star Empires & Battle Fleets

Sometimes characters may want to get involved in an organisation of some kind ranging from a merchant business to a mercenary company, an outpost of Star Patrol, a planetary rebellion, Star Empire or even a vast intergalactic civilisation.

All of these organisations can be created or led by characters or even played as characters themselves.

Constructing an organisation

Organisations (small companies, large religions, world governments, planetary governments, Star Empires) have both Aspects and Skills, albeit from different lists. You can either build an organisation in a phased way like character creation allowing several players to create one each, jointly, or just build them yourself as the Story Teller. Allowing the players to create the organisations is a great way to get an idea of the type of adventures and stories in which the players would like to become embroiled.

Aspects, Stunts & Scale

Different organisations are described in the Organisation table from tiny ones to vast galactic civilisations. Organisations start with the same number of Aspects as the Class on the table below and have four Skills points per Aspect. For example a Class 6 continent-spanning empire would have 6 Aspects and 24 Skills points which could be assigned to Skills as the players or Story Teller sees fit.

The organisation's Scale also determines with whom they can interact. As with ship combat, organisations may only interact with other organisations up to two levels on either side of them without any leadership actions by player characters or Story Teller controlled Named Characters. If players or Named Characters are involved in leadership roles then an organisation can have such an uncomplicated interaction with up to 3 levels on either side.

For example...

A Tiny scale (1) company of mercenaries (of probably 50 soldiers) can affect or interact with a Medium Scale (3) company but can exert no influence on a Large Scale (4) town of tens to hundreds of thousands of people, unless Brandon Carter our recurring hero is leading it of course!

Vice versa, a Galactic scale 10 civilisation has no interest in the affairs of a colossal scale 7 planet – unless the players wish to make a point of dealing with the world, or desperately need its unique resources.

An enormous scale 6 continent of millions of inhabitants has no time for a medium scale 3 company or army of a few thousand people – unless the players are the Vice Presidents or are leading the army into battle.

See the section on Player Intervention on page 292 to find out how players affect the outcome of events, and what kinds of trouble they can cause!

Organization Scale

CLASS	SCALE
10	**Galactic** A vast civilisation spanning a galaxy or beyond
9	**Star Empire** A star empire with many star systems and enormous resources or intergalactic organisation
8	**Interplanetary** Multiple worlds – a small star faring civilisation or megacorporation spread across many star systems and possibly galaxies
7	**Colossal** A whole world, or colossal megacorporation spread across many worlds
6	**Enormous** An enormous continent of millions, an enormous megacorporation spread across several worlds
5	**Huge** A huge region of hundreds of thousands to millions, a huge corporation
4	**Large** A large town or organisation of tens to hundreds of thousands
3	**Medium** A medium company, organisation or town of a few thousand of people
2	**Small** A large settlement, or small company of a few hundred or so people
1	**Tiny** A company or village or organisation of around 50-100 people

Organisation Aspects & Scope

As with characters and Starships these Aspects reflect the nature of the organisation. Organisations Aspects always include the **Scope** and nature of the organisation.

The Scope of the organisation can encompass a number of elements, like the size of the membership, how far-reaching the organisation can be. Scope is always shown as a number. It is not the same as Influence, that's covered by Skills, but they are complimentary. Scope is also different to Scale. Scale could be used to measure how big the organisation physically is, whereas Scope is a measure of where it is physically present.

For example...

In the example of the Tiny scale (1) company of mercenaries above lets say they are instead a highly secret organisation of assassins. Their Scope could be 6 showing how they have a presence in 6 of the regions of the galaxy, world or empire even though their scale is only 1

Scope is rarely measured precisely, but as a rule of thumb it correlates with how many areas of influence the organisation extends to on a 1/1 basis, where areas are space sectors or planetary zones, always depending on the scale of the setting. Scope also sets the default difficulty for many internal activities, especially of an administrative nature.

You define Scope first by working out how many areas there are in the setting. For instance if the Galaxy in your campaign has 5 detailed sectors and the Star Patrol organisation cover's 3 of them, their scope would be 3. This represents a fairly large organisation of people and resources however it also means that all administration tasks have a default difficulty of Good (+3).

The Suicide Squad with a scope of 1 would cover just 1 of the detailed areas of the city and represents a small group of soldiers.

Aspects should give insight in to the nature of the organisation and give a sense of the sort of activities the organisation pursues. They could reinforce Skills or describe what manner of philosophy it follows.

Organisation Skills

Skills measure those things the organisation can do, such as exercising influence or drawing upon resources. While there are only a few Skill types in comparison to characters, an organisation may take them multiple times to specify the area of use. For example an organisation might have Influence: Galactic Badlands and Influence: Galactic Centre

Organisation Skills have very specific uses, and as such cannot be freely substituted for each other. If an organisation has a great deal of influence, and wants to use that influence to secure resources, then that should be represented by a Resources Skill. Unlike player characters, some Skills are simply not available

Organisation Aspects

Here's some general organisation Aspects to give you ideas:

Aggressive
Anything Goes
Backed by [Organisation']
Backwards
Benevolent Emperor
Criminal
Crumbling Civilisation
Cut off for Centuries
Dark Secrets
Degenerate
Diplomatic Devils
Don't Turn Your Back on Them
Enslaved to [Insert Another Organisation's Name]
Evil and Merciless
Evil Theocracy
Expansionist
In League With The Aliens/Slavers
In Open Rebellion
Incompetent forces
Insurrection
Member of the [Insert Another Organisation's Name]
Mercantile
Military Coup
Newly Conquered
Peace-Loving
Recovering from War
Squabbling Democracy
Technopriesthood
Tyrannical Corporation
Warmongering
Weak Willed

We'll be adding plenty more examples of Organisation Aspects to the website at *www.starblazeradventures.com*

if the organisation does not possess them – such as Lost Technology, whilst others Skills may default to Abysmal (-3) if not chosen.

Organisations are bound by the same rules regarding the Skill pyramid that characters are, the Story Teller may grant exceptions as with Starships (which often have wider Skill pyramids when they are military or government manufacture).

Organisations receive four times the organisation's Aspects in Skill points (which is the same as the Scale of the organisation). For example if a Scale 6 continental empire has 6 Aspects that means it receives 24 Skill points to spend on the Skill pyramid.

Skills

When an organisation does not choose to take a Skill but subsequently needs it, check whether it's Default setting allows it to be used. For example if a Skill has 'Default: Not Available' an organisation may not use it if it does not choose this Skill whereas 'Default: Abysmal (-3)' would allow the organisation to use the Skill but at a -3 modifier if it was not listed as a Skill of the organisation..

Control (Region) – Represents how much overt control the organisation holds over a given area, usually in the form of institutionalised rule. Default: Mediocre (+0) location of organisation headquarters, Abysmal (-3) all over locations.

Sway (Region) – Represents non-institutional power over a given area, such as respect, fear or any other appropriate motivation. Like control, sway is obvious and it does much which control does. Default: Mediocre (+0) location of organisation headquarters, Abysmal (-3) all over locations.

Why take Sway instead of Control?

The single biggest difference between Sway and Control is one of responsibility. Control is appropriate for ruling bodies and the like who are tied to the region they control. In contrast Sway provides some amount of power, but it does not carry the responsibility to the region which Control does.

Influence (Region) – This represents how much secret sway the organisation has in the region. Practically speaking, this works in the same way Sway does, but unlike Sway (which is obvious), there is no obvious link back to the organisation. Default: Mediocre (+0) location of organisation headquarters, Abysmal (-3) all over locations.

COUNCILLORS, YOU ALL KNOW OF ALTA'S ESCAPE. WE WORKED OUT HIS MAXIMUM RANGE AND PROBABLE DESTINATION. THE ONLY CONCLUSION WE CAN DRAW IS THE MOST TERRIFYING. ALTA IS HEADED FOR . . . .

Control, Sway, and Influence in action

Story Tellers should consider the use of Control, Sway and Influence by organisations run by themselves or player characters. Each has similar but different uses. For example you can use your Influence to ensure that the Maskan Space Pirates only attack convoys belonging to your competitors, or you can use Sway so that yours get through customs more easily. Alternatively you could use Control to ban your competitors from operating in that area.

It's a matter of usage: you can't use Influence to co-ordinate the relief effort after a meteor strike, you can't use Sway to send in troops to quell a rebellion and you can't use Control to make sure that the galactic council votes through the legislation you need.

Information (Region) – Represents knowledge of current events in this area and is most appropriate for organisations with decent intelligence and espionage arms. Default: Mediocre (+0)

Arms (Type) – Many organisations have access to armed forces – whether it's a few guards or vast fleets and armies. The level roughly represents the size and quality. However if an organisation has more than one military arm (such as land or space based) more than one Skill should be chosen to show the relative strength of each. Default: Abysmal (-3)

Resources (Type) – The type is usually money but could be a trade commodity, natural resource, an unusual service, land rights, power crystals, etc. Default: Mediocre (+0)

Unity – Measures how unified the organisation is with higher unity meaning less internal strife. High unity organisations tend to be more stable. Default: Mediocre (+0)

Administration – The larger an organisation is, the more of its resources it needs to commit to keeping itself in order, and this Skill measures how effectively that's done. Default: Mediocre (+0)

Communication – The other side of the coin is communication, which is a measure of how effectively a message may be communicated within an organisation. For a small organisation, this Skill may be irrelevant, but for a large organisation, it can be critical. This Skill is also highly complementary to high information Skills. Default: Mediocre (+0)

Diplomacy – Just how good are the leaders, politicians, princes, and ambassadors or embassies at negotiating at the table with other organisations? Default: Mediocre (+0)

Technology – A measure of how advanced the organisation is in relation to another and is used

to determine Initiative in conflicts If both organisations do not have this or have the same level it has no effect but if an attacker's Technology is higher than the other it provides a bonus of the difference between the two to the attackers Arms or Security Skill checks. Default: Mediocre (+0)

Trade – How good is the organisation at trading with others? A measure of its trade goods and abilities. You can set Trade Skill versus trade Skill in negotiations, and a successful Diplomacy check will give a bonus (see Negotiation & Diplomacy). Default: Mediocre (+0)

Security – How good are the guards, patrols, internal security systems, software encryption, secret agents, undercover organisations and other means of protecting the organisations people, holdings and resources? Can be used as an alternative to Technology for determining Initiative in conflicts. Default: Mediocre (+0)

Special Skills

Many organisations will have at least one special Skill which represents something peculiar which that organisation does which others may not. These special Skills could be almost anything, depending on the nature of the setting and the organisation. Here are some examples:

Assassination – The ability to quietly make people go away. Naturally this is illegal pretty much everywhere, and had best be accompanied by a great deal of secrecy. Default: Not Available

Secrecy – This is a measure of how hard it is to find things out about the organisation and (at higher levels) whether or not the organisation exists at all or whether the leaders are even aware of the true nature themselves. Whether this secrecy is an intentional conspiracy or merely the result of extreme obscurity can be determined at creation. Default: Mediocre (+0)

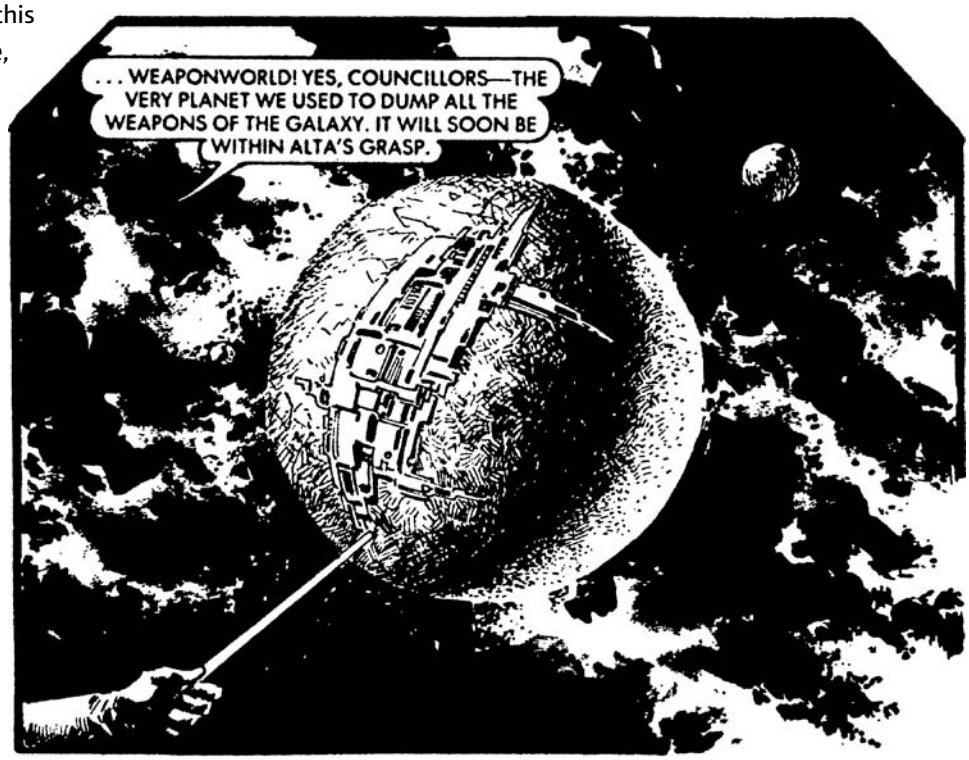
Reputation – The opposite of Secrecy, this is the public face of an organisation in so far as it may deviate from the reality. Most organisations have an implicit reputation based upon their Aspects and activities, but it is possible to put on a "false face" represented by this Skill. Default: Mediocre (+0)

Lore (Type) – The organisation has access to a large body of knowledge of some sort, and it is generally implicit that this knowledge is hard to come by under other circumstances. Default: Not Available

Ancient / Alien / Experimental / Lost Technology – The organisation has access to some manner of strange technology, be it bestowed, discovered, stolen, invented, re-invented. This generally means the organisation has access to individuals or specialised units willing and able to use the technology. The Skill level represents the quality and type of technology. Default: Not Available

Holdings

It is possible for an organisation to spend Skill points on holdings, such as fortresses, headquarters, underground hideouts, fortified planets, giant space stations or vast Star Relics. Generally these are places for the leaders of the organisation to meet at, to retreat to in time of attack, for members to meet in secret or for members of the organisation to carry out secret or specialised work from in relation to the organisation's Skills.


. . . WEAPONWORLD! YES, COUNCILLORS—THE VERY PLANET WE USED TO DUMP ALL THE WEAPONS OF THE GALAXY. IT WILL SOON BE WITHIN ALTA'S GRASP.

Each Skill point translates in to a different quality for the Holding. No quality may be taken more than once for a Holding.

Here are some examples of qualities that could be taken for a Holding.

Fortified – the holding is protected in some way (+2 to any defensive rolls against outright Arms attacks)

Secure – the holding has heavy security systems to protect it from intruders (+2 to difficulties to penetrate the complex undiscovered by Special Forces, Security forces or player characters).

Hidden – the holding is concealed and difficult to find (+2 to difficulties to find it)

Isolated – the holding is far from civilisation (+2 to difficulties to reach it or find it and +2 to Secrecy Skill checks)

Ornate – the holding is impressive to behold (adds +2 to any Rapport, Leadership, or Diplomacy Skill checks conducted inside by the owners or leaders).

Big – the holding counts as the next Scale up and is able to defend against attacks from Organisations two scales either side of that Scale and not the organisation's Scale.

Ancient – the holding was built by an ancient race. It may still contain hidden secrets and may have a bonus Aspect relating to its past.

Unusual – the holding is a series of concealed and dispersed chambers linked by dimensional doorways, looks like a floating sailing ship, or is a Star Relic. Generally the larger and more unusual the greater the size of organisation that would be required to possess it as suggested in the Holding Scale table below.

Feel free to come up with more as you see fit but a Holding quality should never add more than +2 to any particular Skill check or difficulty.

Holding Scale

If an organisation spends Skill points on Holdings, find the Scale of the owning organisation below to get an idea of the number and type of Holdings it might possess. All Holdings will have the same

qualities as the organisation bought with the Skill points above. For example if an Enormous Scale (6) organisation spends 3 Skill points on Holdings and chooses Fortified, Secure and Hidden then it could choose a city size fortress-like secure facility hidden in say an asteroid belt or a number of large secure and fortified hidden bases on several worlds. The actual numbers or type of facility should be approved by the Story Teller.

Holding Scale

CLASS	SCALE
10	**Galactic** A major Galactic engineering project such as several Star Systems aligned together, a network of Star Relics or planetary size installations across the universe.
9	**Star Empire** A whole world, Star Relic or network of colossal installations on one or more worlds
8	**Interplanetary** A network of enormous installations across one or more worlds, or a whole moon or spacestation.
7	**Colossal** A network of huge installations across one or more worlds
6	**Enormous** A city size facility or network of large installations across one or more worlds
5	**Huge** A facility the size of a town or network of medium installations across one or more worlds
4	**Large** A Large building or installation or network of small installations across one or more worlds
3	**Medium** A Medium building or installation or a few scattered hideouts
2	**Small** A Small building or installation
1	**Tiny** A Tiny building or hideout

Using Organisations

Having the details of an organisation provides a good baseline for what various organisations may know and what their interests are. It also provides an easy way to deal with Extra's from that organisation. Simply put, Extra's or Ships will have one Skill of the same level as the organisation's Skill and any other relevant Skills at one level less. For example, if the Pirates of Centauri have Arms (Pirates) at Fair (+2) then Thrall the Pirate could be considered to have Fair (+2) in Weapon and Average (+1) in Gun and Athletics Skills. Equally so encountering a ship of the Robot Warlords of NuEarth who have Arms (Attack Fleet) Good (+3) means their ship could have a Good (+3) Energy weapon and Fair (+2) Shields and Starship Systems. All non-relevant Skills should default to Mediocre if the Extra or Ship would be likely to have them.

Organisations can easily come in to conflict – and this is handled in exactly the same way as with characters by rolling the dice and adding the result to Skill levels. See below for some options on how organisations can interact.

Organisation Stress

An organisation has Physical and Composure stress just like characters. Each track has five boxes plus a bonus of the highest of several alternative Skills. A Story Teller may elect to also add the size of the organisation's Scope to an organisation run by player characters.

Organisation Physical Stress
= 5 + Highest Security or Arms Skill

Organisation Composure Stress
= 5 + Highest Diplomacy, Sway or Control Skill

As with characters, organisations can take a Minor (-2 stress), Major (-4 stress), Severe (-6 stress) and Extreme (-8 stress) consequence to reduce stress, but can only take a total of three consequences before they are taken out.

Obviously the type of consequences taken should reflect the size and scale of the organisations. For example, The Centaurian Star Empire might have a breakdown in civil order as a major consequence, or its fleet might be decimated or its world's are being conquered as an Extreme consequence. The colony world of Argus might have lost its harvest as a

Major consequence or take a hit from a rogue asteroid as an Extreme consequence.

More examples of Organisation Consequences

- People broken
- Ships scattered
- Manufacturing base destroyed
- On it's knees
- Just children left to fight
- Communications disrupted
- Famine
- Violent storms
- Massive earthquakes
- Rebellion incited
- Trade agreements cancelled
- Look like fools
- Laughed at
- Army routed
- Fleet decimated
- Harvest destroyed
- Civil disobedience
- Rioting in the cities
- Annihilated
- Wiped out to the last man woman and child

Healing an Organisation's Stress and Consequences

Stress clears out at the end of a 'scene' as usual, Minor consequences clear or are 'dealt with' after a week or a scene (as long as the organisation does not have any conflict in the subsequent scene), Major after a few weeks, Severe after a few months and Extreme will require extensive work by the player characters to save the day, the organisation is on the brink of collapse, could be routed, or in defeat.

Minor, Major and Severe consequences could still require action on the behalf of the characters though. You could ask them to describe how they are going to deal with the lost harvest, the massive damage of an asteroid strike or the defeat of the navy, it just depends what level of involvement the Story Teller or players would like. Either way, they better get ready to roll up their sleeves and get to work saving the galaxy!

Organisation Scenes

Organisations take actions over the course of a week. For purposes of clearing stress, a scene is said to be a week and the subsequent week must be without action however if the action – attacks or defence – continues in the next scene then the stress remains.

Use weeks as periods of time to determine travel time, length of negotiations, preparations for and the actual attacks, special ops missions.

B

Organisation Conflict & Manoeuvres

Each scene should last a week of game time and during this week an organisation can attempt one of the actions below for each player character or named character involved in the leadership with a minimum of one action. Each action beyond the first suffers a cumulative -1 penalty. That means the first additional manoeuvre suffers -1, the next -2 and so on. Organisations with none or just one player or named character involved may take one action.

Un-Opposed Actions

Just as characters can attempt actions un-opposed, so can organisations. This can involve any of the organisations Skills such as Research & Development (using the Technology Skill) to improve Arms, Technology or Resource Skills, establishing outposts or colonies (using Resources or Arms Skills), exploration (using Resources), disaster relief (using Resources or Arms Skills), peace keeping (using Arms Skills), and much more.

Feel free to add new Organisation Skills that you feel are relevant for your campaign and think about how each organisation would use them.

The organisation Skills provide considerable opportunities for all kinds of leaders and plenty of scope for the kinds of adventures your players could want. Simply pick the most appropriate Skill for the situation if it is not covered above.

Remember if you're not sure you should assume that the difficulty starts at 1 for an un-opposed action or more if you want to make the player's lives harder. Don't spend time pouring over these rules looking for an exception. At the end of the day it's a story, use the rules to guide you.

For unusual actions relating to control or administration of the organisation, where the players are trying to get the organisation to do something unusual, the default difficulty should be the Organisations scope, see page 282. Obviously for large organisations this can lead to pretty high difficulties, as with say a Galactic scale (10) empire. We never said running a galactic empire would be easy!

For example the players are running the Ladarian scale (10) Space Empire and are faced with a major star nova that will obliterate their home planet. They must re-organise the empire to move it's people away from the danger area. This is a massive undertaking for which the difficulty is 10 and failure could mean many things from not everyone reaching safety to something vital being left behind.

Remember this should not be used for normal tasks that the empire is routinely performing like collecting taxes, supplying the fleets or administering trade routes. You shouldn't even be asking the players to make Skill checks for those. Instead use it for unusual circumstances where the ability to fulfil those previously normal tasks is compromised. Perhaps the chief of staff has been assassinated, a world that supplies the empire with food destroyed or violent storms blocking the communications centre from co-ordinating efforts.

Conflicts

As with character interaction the Story Teller should go through the following phases in a conflict:

- Frame The Scene (announce Aspects in the scene, where leaders or organisation resources or arms are)
- Establish Initiative (use an organisations Security or Technology Skill)
- Take Actions
- Resolve Actions
- Begin a New scene

Organisation and scene Aspects can be invoked, tagged and compelled just as with characters.

See Chapter 2 for a description of the phases, Aspect and Fate point use.

Physical Conflicts

Arms Attacks

Organisations attack and defend against Arms attacks with appropriate Arms. So ship style Arms can only be used to attack and defend against other ship based Arms and targets. Ground based forces (marines, officers, soldiers, armies) can only be used to attack and defend against other ground based forces and targets.

For example...

Star Patrol with Good Arms (+3) 'Fleet' would use it to defend against the Pirates of Centauri Fair Arms (+2) 'Pirate Fleet' attack. However would have to resort to using its Fair Arms (+2) 'Officers' to defend against a Great Arms (+4) 'Battle Marines' attack by the Centauri Marauders.

Assassination

If you wish to use your organisation's Assassination Skill you roll versus the defending organisation's Security Skill. If you succeed the total shifts achieved is added to the next Diplomacy Skill check. If you are unsuccessful deduct the difference in the totals from your organisation's Composure stress.

Security Intervention

Sometimes you have to send special agents in to do your dirty work. To do this, use your Security Skill versus the opponents Security Skill. If you succeed the total shifts generated is added to the next Arms, Diplomacy or Special Ops Skill check, or you succeed at a particular task set by the Story Teller. If you are unsuccessful deduct the difference in the totals from your organisation's Composure stress.

If the target has the Secrecy Skill you have to make a roll with your Arms or Security Skill to first discover the location of facilities that you will 'attack' with your Security Skill. If you fail you find nothing of course and cannot attack until you can successfully discover new information using the same method, which cannot be attempted until the next scene.

Special Ops

You can elect to send elements of your armed forces (Arms Skill) on special missions to blow up targets, cause confusion, mis-information, steal things, kidnap people, rescue missions etc. However it is very damaging to be caught out if both organisations are not at war (organisations are said to be 'at war' when they have had a conflict using Arms Skills).
To do this, use your Arms Skill versus the opponents Arms or Security Skill (whichever relevant Skill is highest – for example Arms (Naval is not counted if you are attacking a ground base). If you succeed the total shifts generated is added to the next Arms, Security or Diplomacy check or you succeed at a specific task set by the Story Teller. If you are unsuccessful deduct the difference in the two totals from your organisation's Composure stress.

Non Physical Conflicts

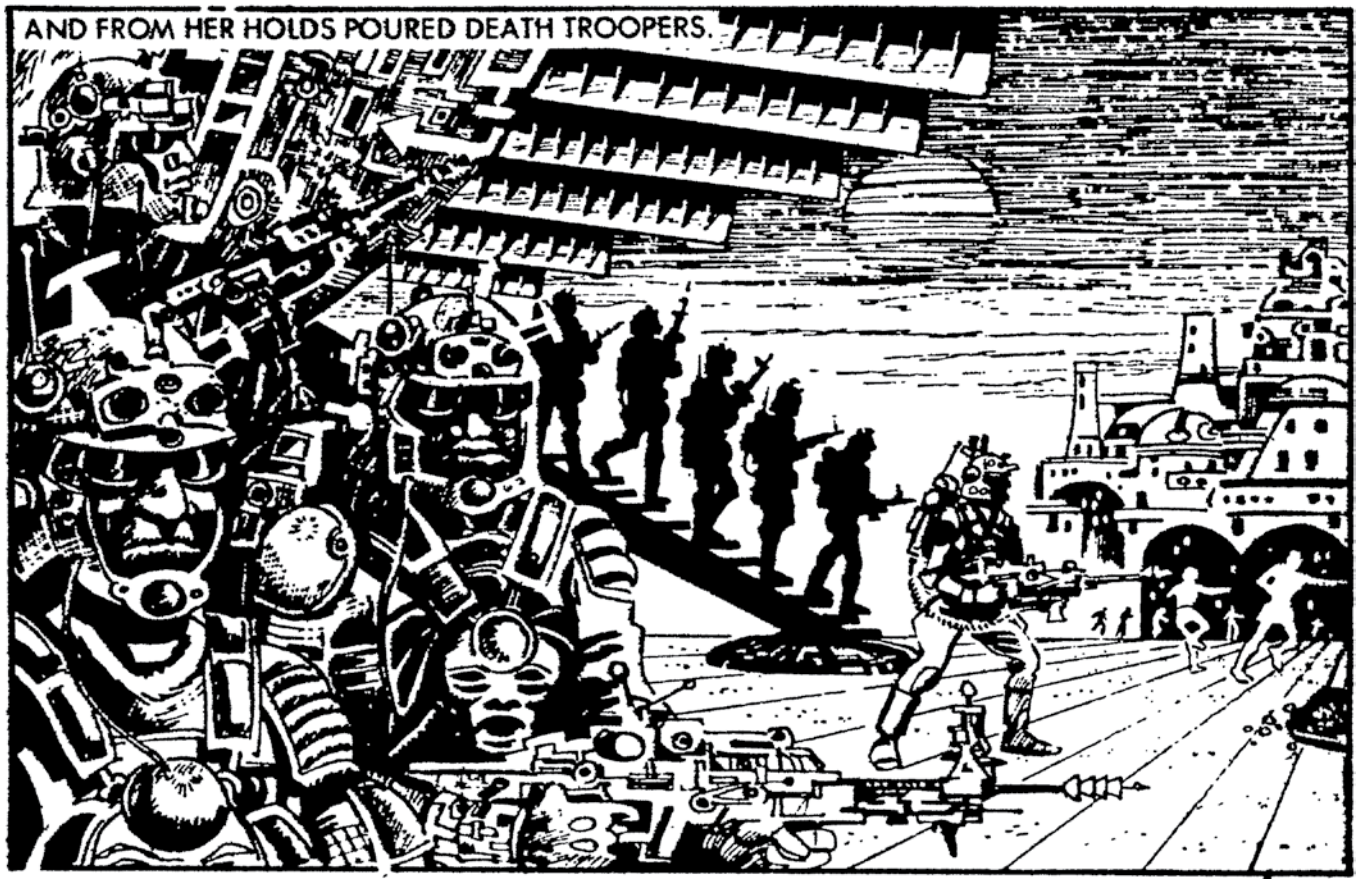
Non-physical conflicts include Diplomacy and Trade missions but others could include hostile corporate take-overs (using Trade Skills) and political campaigns (using Diplomacy Skills).

Diplomacy

Diplomats and politicians are often set against each other to achieve some kind of concession from the defending organisation. This could be the release of a disputed territory, prisoners or information, attempts to cause instability in a region or area or the negotiation of a trade agreement or support for a war.

Use the Diplomacy Skill to attack, defend with the Sway or Control Skill of the Region under 'attack'.

Player characters may instead use their Leadership Skill in place of Diplomacy (along with any Leadership Stunts). Players on the defending side may use their Leadership Skill in place of a region's or area's Sway or



Control Skill if it is higher.

The organisation pushing for the concession rolls their Diplomacy Skill versus the opponents Diplomacy Skill. The total shifts achieved can be used to describe how much the defending organisation conceded. If this is related to a Trade Skill check the shifts generated can be added to the Trade Skill check in the next scene as a bonus. A failure deducts the difference in the attacker's total and defender's total from the subsequent Trade roll.

Trade Mission

Whether a merchant in his ship off to sell goods on behalf of the company, or a major trade meeting with another Star Empire probably consisting of dozens of staff the trade mission is a vital part of any commercial organisation's daily operations.

A successful Diplomacy check prior to a trade mission can provide a bonus (or worse with a failure). Simply make a Skill check with the Trade Skill. Successful shifts can be used to describe the value of a new trade agreement in your organisation's favour. An organisation may send a trade mission once per month of game time (or once every four scenes). Once per game session the value of a trade agreement can be used as a bonus in a Resource Skill check for the organisation.

For example...

The Centaurian Star Empire achieved a total of Great (+4) against the Terran Empire's Average (+1) total in a trade mission sent by the Centaurian's. The 3 shifts generated mean that the Centaurians now have a Good (+3) trade agreement with the Terran Empire and once per game session they can use a Good (+3) bonus in a Resource Skill Check.

If several agreements are in place with different empires the organisation uses the highest bonus. .

Conspiracy!

What's a space opera story without a bit of conspiracy! Often the players will think they've destroyed the heart of the evil pirate organisation only to discover something more sinister lurks behind. A whole campaign could involve peeling away layer after layer of confusion and mystery revealing ever bigger

organisations that are pulling the strings of those below them.

There's a couple of ways of putting this together. Firstly the Story Teller can create the organisations and define the links between each. Secondly you can involve the players. Here's how it works. Ask each player to create an organisation using phases just like character creation so each has Aspects relating to each other. Use the Collaborative Campaign creation method on page 394 to create the overall setting.

A few rules:

- Players may not create characters with membership of these organisations
- At the end of each phase a player should secretly write the name of the organisations closest ally and greatest enemy (both must be organisations being created by the other players), along with any reasons such as 'Came to our aid at the battle of Dralin IV', 'Their ever so friendly intervention in the rebellion on Thantar II gives them control of our trade routes'. The Story Teller looks at these and whenever there is a match up – whether it is enemy to ally or enemy to enemy, ally to ally – adds an Aspect called 'Connection to [name of the organisation]'. This can be used by the Story Teller to generate plots later on.

Having created the organisations in this manner the Story Teller then reviews the Aspects and any reason's cited by the players along with the connections generated and uses this as a basis for the conspiracy. This is a great way of ensuring the foundation for the story is firmly within the expectations of the players.

Player Intervention

Players may assist organisations they are involved in at leadership level. If they do so they may not take part in any other activities that week.

A player character as a leader in an organisation allows it to interact with other organisations up to three Scales different rather than the normal two. The player must describe a way in which the character/s in the leadership role are helping the organisation to affect the larger or small organisation, Such as leading a special forces raid on the larger organisation's headquarters or concentrating on rooting out enemies in a particular town. This does not require the player character to have the Leadership Skill.

The Leadership Skill has a series of Stunts called Capable Leader, Born Leader, Hero, Diplomat or Prince, Emperor, president or tyrant. When one or more of these Stunts are chosen they allow the leader to add bonuses to certain Skill checks by the organisation.

THEY WERE TAKEN DEEP INTO THE BASE—
THE CREAM OF THE LEO WANTED LIST ARE HERE. MANY OF THEM ARE DEADLY RIVALS. FOR WHAT PURPOSE ARE THEY GATHERED, I WONDER?
. . . OUR WORK WITH THE MERCENARY COMBAT FORCE IS NEARING COMPLETION. THEY'RE ITCHING TO GO!

Highlight Scenes!

Players can spend a Fate Point at any time to declare an "highlight scene" during an organisation conflict or manoeuvre. This "highlight scene" zooms in on the player's actions and shows how he is adding to the overall effort (like destroying the base's power station, rallying the marines, leading a charge, convincing the wife of a diplomat to help their cause). The character makes a Skill check against the organisation's relevant Skill (or an appropriate Skill level as indicated by the target organisation's Resource

Skill). If he succeeds he is able to add +2 to the Organisation's next roll.

Emergency Scenes

The Story Teller has a pool of points equal to two times the number of player character leaders (those in positions of leadership within the organisation). He can spend one of these points at any time to create an "emergency scene" (similar to a mandated "highlight scene"). This "emergency scene" is assigned to a specific player (which should change). Basically the player is required to solve a task that is critical to the overall efforts; "the Centaurians have broken the trade agreement", "they've kidnapped the president!", "the flagship is under attack", "our diplomat has been poisoned" or "you have to take over negotiations"). He rolls against a static difficulty (say "Great") or the enemy organisation or fleet gets a +2 for its roll because of his failure.

Playing it out

A Story Teller could decide to allow the players to take part in a mission, with the players trying to have a serious effect on the result. For example the players may infiltrate the pirate base ahead of the Star Patrol marine assault in the hope of shutting down the automated defences. This would be one or more scenes to play through with the player's characters. If they succeed their Organisation gets a massive +4 on the Skill check related to this event, an attack by the Star Patrol Arms (Marines) Skill against the pirates for example. There is a catch though, for every consequence taken by player characters during the mission, it reduces the bonus by 1. It could also affect other operations of the organisation whilst the characters are away from headquarters. Are the people left in charge capable?

Battle Fleets & Brave Armies!

Rather than leave it to the roll of one dice, you could zoom in and have an exciting fleet or land battle. There are two scales to this: Star Empire or Fleet Scale.

Send in the fleet or the army

Organisations can send the navy in, and get 1 fleet (or 1 capital ship, Large ship Wing or Fighter Squadron for Fleet scale) per level of control or sway in the region under conflict. If you have no Sway or Control in the region roll using your Arms versus your opponents Control or Sway as the difficulty with the shifts being the number of fleets (or ships/wings/squadrons for Fleet Scale) you managed to bring to bear.

For example if Star Patrol had a Control of 3 in the Border Region then it could have say 2 Fighter Squadrons and a Large Ship Wing in the forthcoming fleet battle.

In the same example if the Terran Federation had a Control of 3 in the Milky Way it could have 3 whole Fleets at Star Empire scale.

If you have a higher Tech Skill the difference is added as a bonus.

In the same way organisations can send in armies – which could be whole army units like battalions or individual units such as massive war platforms, units of large battle platforms or squadrons of tank like assault platforms.

Now play the fleet or land combat!

Fleet & Land Combat

If you're fighting with anything more than a few ships use this simpler method to keep the game firmly on track with storytelling and the number crunching to the minimum.

At the basic level fleets, ground armies or large groups of ships are represented as a "stress track" along with a set of Aspects relating to the fleet's general nature.

Star Empire scale

You have 5 stress boxes for the first fleet and a bonus stress box for each additional fleet after the first. For land combat you could have 5 stress boxes for the first company, regiment, battalion, division or army (it's up to you what scale you want to use) and a bonus stress box for each additional army unit of the same scale after the first. Try to base it on the scale of the organisation's armed forces and the seniority of player characters involved – if they could only command a battalion don't give them a whole army!

Use the Aspects of the Empire for the fleets or army. At this level you're close to the Organisation Scale – see page 281, where you can determine the effect small armies, empires and other large organised forces clashing in a variety of ways using organisation Skills.

Do you really need to play through a fleet battle?

Fleet & Armies Scale

You have 5 stress boxes for the first capital ship (or wing of large ships or fighters) plus 1 stress box for each extra capital ship, Large Ship Wing of up to 6 ships (Cruisers, Frigates) or fighter wing (about 25 fighters or Torpedo bombers) after the first. Use the Aspects of the Command ship.

Example: A Star Patrol Fleet

1 Large Ship Wing (6 Ships)
2 Fighter wings (24 fighters)

Aspects:

- Fight them to the last
- Our men are the best in the Galaxy

Stress Track:

□□□□□ □□
(two extra stress for the fighter wings)

The Aspects of the "fleet" are based on the flagship.

For ground based combats assign 5 stress boxes for the first war platform, or unit of battle platforms or assault platforms.

Example: Army Units

Assault Platform Scale 2
Fast moving light to heavy tanks or troop carriers

Battle Platform Scale 3
Slow moving crawlers bristling with weapons

War Platform Scale 4
Massive walking war machines capable of devastating whole cities

Fleet & Land Conflicts

Conflicts are resolved using the admiral or commander's Leadership Skill and the organisation's Technology or Security for Initiative.

Aspects of the fleets and the scene may be invoked, tagged and compelled by the organisation or leader.

As with the Minion rules when there are two or three war platforms, army units, capital ships, wings or fleets in a battle, the group receives a +1 bonus to act and react. If there are four to six, the bonus is +2; seven to nine gets a +3 bonus, and any single group with ten or more members gets +4. You can either base this on actual capital ships and ship wings (don't count the number of fighters) or on total stress boxes for purposes of resolving the commanders rolls.

Turn sequence

- Determine Initiative (based on opposing organisation's Technology or Security Skills)
- Attacker declares action (either a manoeuvre or an attack... both based on their Leadership Skill) and any applicable Leadership Stunts
- Defender resolves (using Leadership to resist).
- Defender then attacks

If the attacker achieves 'spin' by rolling 3 or more on the unmodified dice roll and hits, the commander can assign any damage caused in the way the player desires (which means that capital ships can be assigned a single hit, etc). This can be useful if a capital ship has a mega cannon that is being powered up, or the loss of a carrier will leave all those fighters stranded. As additional ships or army units beyond the first only add one stress box to a fleet or army then 'spin' allows the attacker to destroy a key target.

First side to 0 stress (or to concede) loses.

THE COMPARTMENT DEPRESSURISED AND THE TWO ROBOTS FLOATED SLOWLY INTO SPACE.
THEY HAVE TAKEN THE COMMANDER.
WE HAVE SUFFERED A TEMPORARY SET-BACK . . . BRAIN WILL HAVE TO BE CONSULTED. FOLLOW ME BACK TO THE SHIP.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Hover Cars, Robots, and Mandroids

What space opera game would be complete without a bunch of anti-gravity patrol cars, lumbering war machines, killer robots or android replacement parts for your heroes?

This chapter includes some general guidelines for vehicles and robots which use the same rules of interaction as for characters. You'll find some standard vehicles and rules for how to create a robot or Mandroid character with android parts.

Mandroids

Mandroid Implants

Just like Francis (aka Frank) Carter (the cop who is half android and half man – see page 510) characters and Extras can have android implants or replacement body parts. This can be done during character creation or as part of character advancement, or during downtime to deal with the consequences of lost limbs, the influence of new Aspects or during any other situation the player and Story Teller agree on.

Implants might enable the character to take more physical or composure stress, add bonuses to Skill checks through enhanced strength or mental capacity and can even allow strange new abilities.

Mandroid Aspects & Stunts

Adding android body parts is a disturbing process even for the most technologically friendly characters. This can lead to the character questioning his humanity, or other effects of deep psychological impact. Not everyone deals with it well.

The first time a normal body part is replaced by an android part the character adds a suitable Mandroid Aspect. For example you could go from the extreme of 'Just a ghost in the machine' to 'Shiny body parts make me look sexy!'.

Each body part replaced by an android implant also adds a Mandroid Stunt to a character (such as Mandroid Arm or Mandroid Eye). This does not count towards the character's choices of Stunts, but does reduce their Fate point Refresh. If that ever reaches 0 they become an emotionless machine and ultimately an Extra!

The Mandroid Aspect can be both compelled and tagged to make the character ignore his emotions when he most needs them. It can also be compelled to make the implants malfunction at just the wrong time or tagged to put an inhuman effort into conflicts at critical moments.

Android implants are detailed with the Resource Skill check difficulty required to obtain them and any special notes regarding the implants.

Android Implant Table

Type	Cost
Arm	Superb
The character has an Android arm replacement. Add 1 physical stress box, add +1 to Might, Endurance, Athletic, Fists or Weapon skill checks. Add Mandroid Arm Stunt.	
Leg	Superb
The character has an android leg replacement. Add 1 physical stress box, add 1 to Might, Endurance or Athletic skill checks. Add Mandroid Leg Stunt.	
Eyes	Superb*
The character has had their eyes replaced by android eyes which provide a +1 bonus to Alertness Skill checks. Add special ability (Eagle Eyes Vision see page 255 but do not add weaknesses). Add Mandroid Eyes Stunt.	
Chest	Fantastic*
The character has had part or all of their chest replaced by android implants. Add 2 physical stress boxes, add one special ability (see Chapter 14) but no weakness. Add Mandroid Chest Stunt.	
Mind	Fantastic*
The character has had their brain augmented by android implants to boost its abilities, repair damage or unlock latent talent. Add 2 Composure stress boxes. Add +1 to Academics and Science Skill checks. Character may add one special Psionic ability (page 259) and must add minor weaknesses as detailed by the chosen ability. Add Mandroid Mind Stunt.	

* Items marked with an asterisk are only available to those with access to Restricted equipment or with the right 'contacts' within the medical profession.

A Mandroid can forego the Skill bonus of a Leg or Arm implant to add a piece of equipment inside the limb or a special ability from Chapter 14. Choosing a special ability requires the character to take any required weaknesses.

All modifiers above are cumulative, so for example Adam Mantis the Pirate Lord with all of the above implants (including both legs and both arms, Eyes, Chest and Mind) would have:

- A Mandroid Aspect such as 'Rebuilt for Revenge!'
- 7 Mandroid Stunts (dangerously close to becoming an Extra unless these are his only Stunts)
- +4 to Might, Endurance or Athletic Skill checks
- +2 to Weapon* or Fists Skill checks
- +1 to Academics or Science Skill checks*
- +1 to Alertness Skill checks
- 6 extra Physical Stress
- 2 extra Composure Stress
- Either the Enhanced or Long Distance Vision abilities
- A Psionic special ability and related weaknesses

* Bonuses marked with an asterisk are only available if the character has the relevant Skill. They are not added to the default Mediocre (+0) Skill level of a Skill that a player character does not have.

Robots

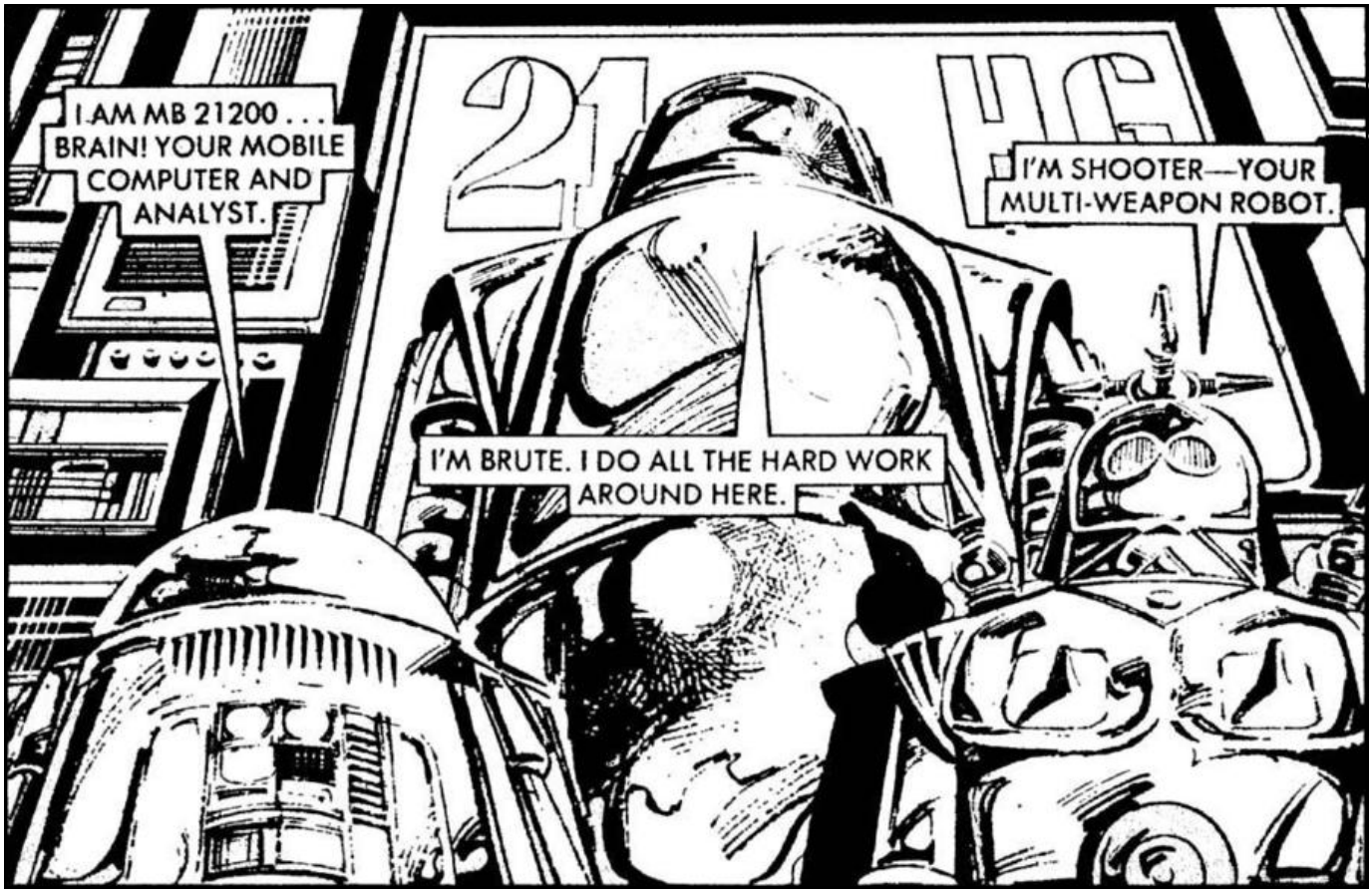
Robots of Scale 2 pick Skills from character Skills (Chapter 7) and Stunts (Chapter 8). Robots of Scale 3 and 4 pick from Starship Systems and Skills (Chapter 21). All robots may also choose from the Special Abilities in Chapter 14, however they must also take any stated Minor Weaknesses. The chosen special abilities must be described in a technological way. For example the Flight Stunt may be an inbuilt anti-grav unit.

Robots start with 5 Physical and 5 System Stress (which can be damaged by electricity-based attacks, hacking and EMP weapons) much like Starship Systems stress (page 312) can be damaged by Electronic Warfare Attacks.

Robots can take up to 3 consequences from the range of Minor, Major, Severe and Extreme, just like characters.

Robots as player characters

At the Story Teller's discretion, a player may create a robot character. For all intents and purposes they are created the same way as a human being but describe any special abilities in robotic terms. They can only be Scale 2 and of the same form as their homeworld's race. Robot player characters have System Stress instead of Composure Stress but it is treated as Composure Stress for social conflicts. This makes


I AM MB 21200 . . . BRAIN! YOUR MOBILE COMPUTER AND ANALYST.
I'M SHOOTER—YOUR MULTI-WEAPON ROBOT.
I'M BRUTE. I DO ALL THE HARD WORK AROUND HERE.

them vulnerable to electricity-based, hacking and EMP attacks.

Players should discuss this choice with the Story Teller and agree on Aspects that describe why this robot is part of the group or doing its own thing. Assume they are 'special' units perhaps created as prototypes or maybe they are all that's left of an ancient race.

Robot characters do not clear consequences with time. They must be repaired instead of taking time to heal damage. Stress does clear after a scene. Assume the robot's structure cools from the energy attacks, systems reboot etc. Robot characters are limited to repairing Minor and Major consequences on themselves and they must have the Engineering Skill to do so. Repairing Robot consequences is treated the same as treating PC consequences (see page 223).

Social Conflicts & Robots

Robots use System Stress for social conflicts – assume it is instead stress on their logic circuits. In this way a particularly astute character could argue their way out of being blasted by a killer robot. Robots can be programmed with Empathy, Resolve and other Skills useful for social interaction.

Robot Character Morals

A Story Teller can require that a player character follow the Laws Of Robotics (as proposed by Isaac Asimov) in all their actions. It can be assumed that most civilisations will develop a similar robotic moral code so if the robot is from a non-human race replace 'human' or 'humanity' with the race's name. Pre-galactic civilisation robots will have their moral code limited to their owner's race. In the Galactic Era assume that 'humanity' is replaced by 'galactic civilisation' and 'human' by 'living'.

0. A robot may not harm humanity, or, by inaction, allow humanity to come to harm.
1. A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.
2. A robot must obey orders given to it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the law 0 or 1.
3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with laws 0, 1 or 2.

Security and Military robots have these laws ammended to specifically reference the staff of their owning organisation or their side in the war. All other targets are fair game.

Rogue robots do exist in classic space opera stories so Story Tellers can allow this as a choice for a player. They could be from a time when robots ruled, a prototype, damaged by radiation or hacked to remove their moral programming.

If the player character wishes to be a rogue robot it has two consequences. Firstly the character must choose an Aspect relating to this, such as 'Hunted for crimes against humanity' or 'Released by the Rogue AI's of Saturn'. Secondly the robot character will have a -2 modifier to all Skill checks dealing with intelligent computer systems or robots, who automatically know the robot is 'corrupted' and therefore not to be trusted.

Robot Control

Some robot Extras may be programmed to follow commands from all humans, their master, their superiors (whether robot or living being) or by anyone with appropriate ID. Other robots may choose to accompany beings or work with them for their own mysterious reasons. A player character robot could have an interesting negative Aspect which relates to their masters – especially if they put in an appearance from time to time.

If a robot is created with the laws of robotics it cannot act on an order which causes it to break any of the laws of robotics. If a robot is given such an order it simply ignores the order. If the robot believes orders may lead to a situation whereby it might be breaking any of the laws then the person giving the orders must make an Empathy, Intimidation, Leadership or Rapport Skill check (depending on the circumstances) to convince the robot to act. As an alternative to standard Social conflicts a Science or Academic Skill check (based on a relevant career or knowledge of robotics or computer systems) could also be used to argue the case for the robot to follow the questionable orders.

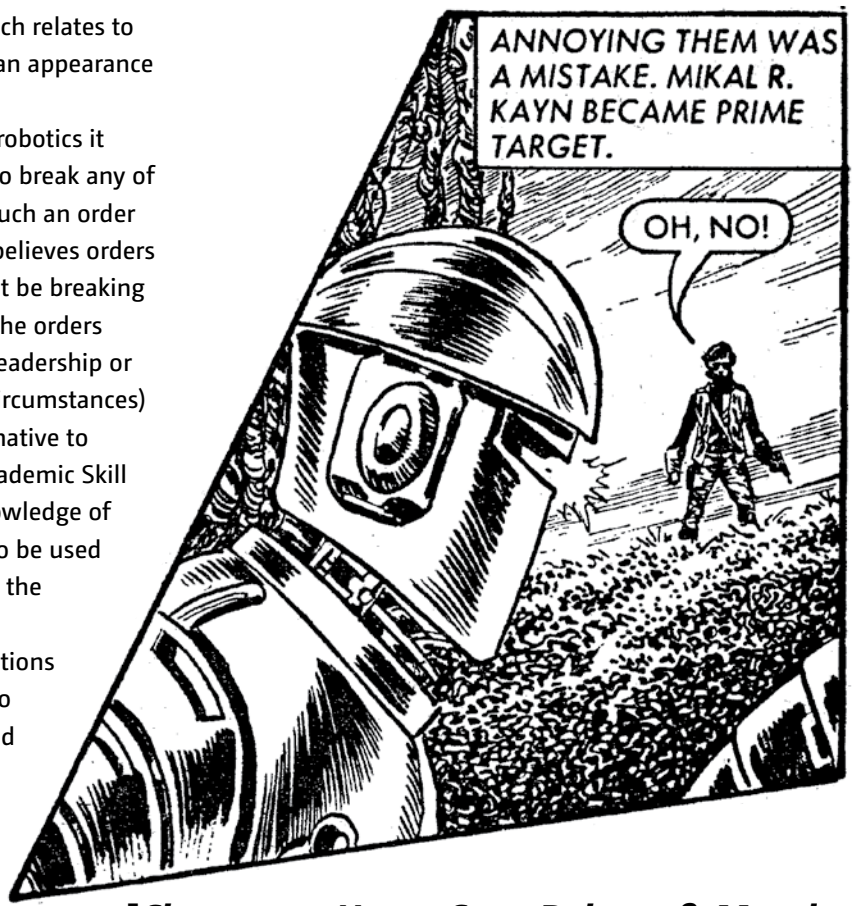
Where robots are assigned to installations or Starships they may be programmed to obey the ID of crew or superiors. ID could come in the form of colour coded cards, badges, wristbands, batons, jewellery or other small items which are embedded with codes that the robot recognises. These codes could be unique genetic code, certain types of radiation, unique passwords or other hard to copy data embedded in the item.

Standard Robots

Here's a guide to some typical robots for use as Extras and the type of Skills (or programmes) they should have.

Type	Cost	Scale
Companion	Superb	2
Skills: 2 x Average		
Security	2 x Superb*	2
Skills: 1 x Fair, 3 x Average		
Combat	Fantastic*	2
Skills: 2 x Fair, 3 x Average		
Assault	Epic*	3
Skills: 1 x Good, 2 x Fair, 3 x Average		
Warbot	2 x Epic*	4
1 x Great, 2 x Good, 3 x Fair, 4 x Average		

*Items marked with an asterisk are Restricted Equipment



Just like humans, robots do have all Skills at Mediocre as basic programming (except Companion robots which do not have default offensive Skills: Fists, Weapons or Guns).

Robots that are Extras may have as many Stunts as they have Skills.

Robot Descriptions

Companion Robots are typically servants or personal assistants with basic Skills and responsibilities. They would rarely have any kind of offensive Skills unless their owner has specifically requested it and had the right authority or connections.

Security Robots range from police robots that look like the police officers they are supporting to unusually shaped units charged with guarding installations. Typically they would be armed with the same kind of hand weapon that their living counterparts carry and in some cases the weapon is built into their structure if they are not shaped like a living being.

Combat Robots are mainly found in the armed forces or organisations able to afford the high cost of acquiring and maintaining them. They are typically front line troops that absorb the brunt of losses during an offensive. Some rich organisations may have a number to help guard high security installations. Combat Robots are normally armed with the same kind of weapon that other front line troops have.

Assault Robots are tank like automated weapons similar to Assault platforms described under Vehicles. They are used by advanced armed forces to minimise risk to their troops. They will usually have tracks, hover or wheeled movement and mount one heavy weapon. They may choose from Starship Systems and Skills in Chapter 21.

Warbots are massive robotic units and may be in control of large numbers of Battle or Assault Robots. They are designed for large scale warfare and will usually have a devastating weapon system. Warbots should be built using Starship Systems and Skills in Chapter 21.

Sample Robots

Polly the Companion Robot – Scale (2)

A typical household robot, Polly is designed to manage the household and act as a companion to her owners. She is clearly a robot but with human-like features.

Average (+1) Academics, Rapport

Polly is programmed with a basic understanding of academics covering all the knowledge she needs to safely run a household. She is also programmed with a useful understanding of human affairs for conversation so she can relate to humans and keep them company. Polly is programmed to obey any of the members of the household but will defer to members of the police or medical authorities.

Mark III Security Robot – Scale (2)

The Mark III was introduced to assist Star Patrol with general police duties on board Star Patrol craft and help support under-manned outposts.

Fair (+2) Guns

Average (+1) Fists, Alertness, Investigation

Equipment: Shok Gun, Energy Shield (-1)

Whilst the Mark III has the Skills to support officers in the field with standard arrest and detain operations. It also has a basic programming in investigation to support officers' enquiries. The Mark III obeys Star Patrol officers, with ranking officers having final say.

Earth Defence Force Combat Robot

The EDF combat robot is designed to supplement naval marine forces and is amongst the first to board dangerous enemy warships.

Fair (+2) Weapons, Guns

Average (+1) Alertness, Athletics

Equipment SMG (+3), Energy Axe (+4), Energy Shield (-1)

Stunts: Zero G Combat [Weapons]

The EDF combat robot is a typical frontline combat robot designed to operate in space. Its special programming and design makes it effective in zero gravity operations.

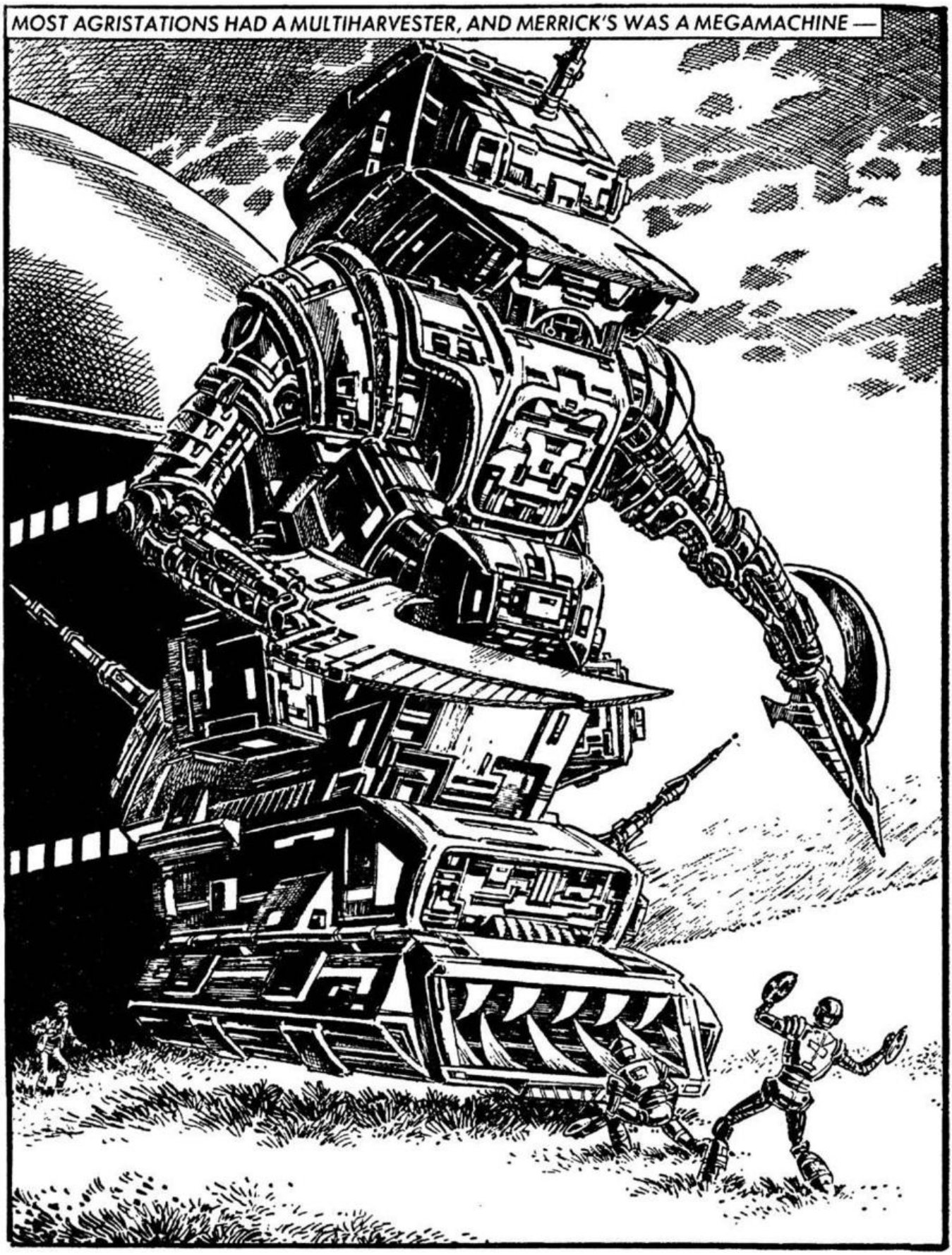
Centaurian Assault Robot – Scale (3)

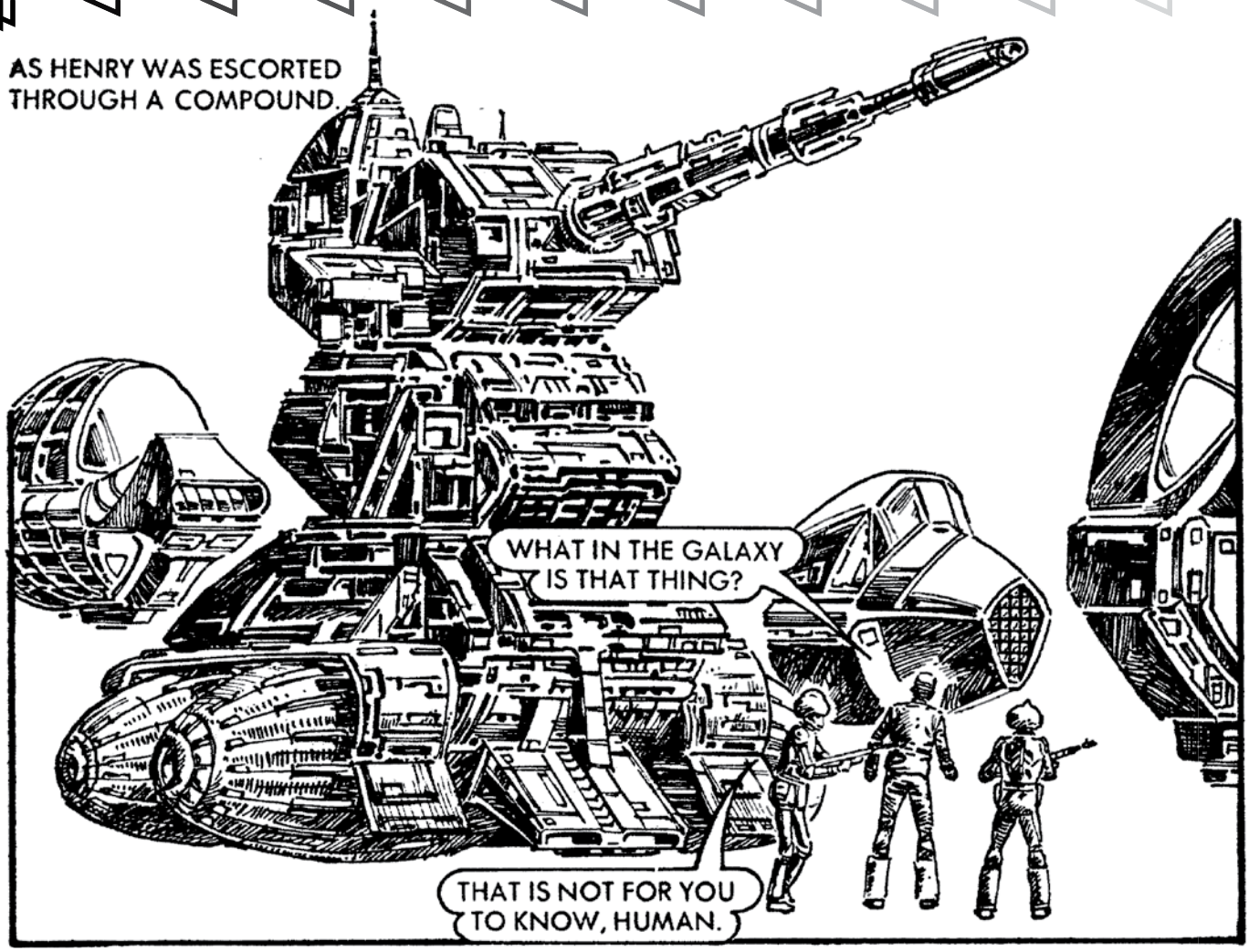
The Centaurians have long since reduced the risk to their valuable trained armed forces personnel by utilising waves of Assault robots in their fighting units. These anti-grav equipped tanks are co-ordinated by AI combat centres and their accompanying Centaurian commanders.

Good (+3) Energy Weapon

Fair (+2) Energy Weapon, Vehicle Systems

Average (+1) Flight [Special], Manoeuvre, Energy Shield


MOST AGRISTATIONS HAD A MULTIHARVESTER, AND MERRICK'S WAS A MEGAMACHINE —



The assault robot's Flight Skill allows it to glide over the ground but does not give it full flight capability. The Starship Manoeuvre Skill is used for defensive Skill checks and speed whilst the main energy weapon is used to attack and the secondary Fair (+2) energy weapon contributes it's bonus to stress on a successful hit.

Federation Warbot callsign 'Alpha 2525'

Built during one of the great Thermal Wars this Warbot remained on active duty even though its commanders were long since dead. When it was finally violently 'decommissioned' amidst the ruins of New Glasgow it had developed an insane personality complex.

Great (+4) Energy Weapon
Good (+3) Projectile Weapon, Vehicle Systems
Fair (+2) Energy Shield, Armour, Projectile Weapon
Average (+1) Energy Weapon, Manoeuvre, Targeting Computer, Hardened Structure

Alpha 2525 is a large tracked vehicle mounting several weapon systems and defences as well as sophisticated Vehicle systems with AI control.

Vehicles

Vehicles are either basic utility platforms (using wheels or hover modes for personal travel) or they are more sophisticated military vehicles which can have certain limited Skills chosen from the Starship Skills Chapter. Vehicles are described in quite a generic way in this section and are intended as a guide to help the Story Teller flesh out their own descriptions.

Vehicles have 5 physical stress and 5 system stress (which can be damaged by electricity-based attacks, hacking and EMP weapons) much like Starship Systems stress (see Chapter 19) can be damaged by Electronic Warfare Attacks. Vehicles can take up to 3 consequences from the range of Minor, Major, Severe and Extreme, just like characters and can take more if they have the Armour or Energy Shields Skill.

Vehicles	Speed	Costs
Living Mount	Average	Fair
Personal	Fair	Good
Sports Personal	Good	Superb
Explorer	Fair	Superb
Truck	Average	Great
Passenger Bus	Average	Great
Scout	Good	Great*
Armoured Car	Fair	Superb*
Assault Platform	Fair	Fantastic*
Battle Platform	Average	Epic*
War Platform	Average	Legendary*

Vehicles	Scale	Skills
Living Mount	2	
Personal	2	
Sports Personal	2	
Explorer	2	1 x Average
Truck	2	
Passenger Bus	2	
Scout	2	2 x Average
Armoured Car	2	1 x Fair, 2 x Average
Assault Platform	2	1 x Good, 2 x Fair, 3 x Average
Battle Platform	3	2 x Good, 3 x Fair, 4 x Average
War Platform	4	2 x Great, 3 x Good, 4 x Fair, 5 x Average

The speeds listed are relative speeds to other vehicles and only come in to use for contests of which vehicle is faster (roll Speed vs. Speed, modified by respective Drive or Pilot Skills as appropriate). For anything more complex see the chase rules on page 112.

Vehicles choose Skills from the Starship Systems, Skills and Stunts Chapter 19 though are limited in what they can choose – see below. Vehicles may have as many Stunts as they have Skills.

Story Tellers should feel free to increase the level of vehicle Skills to make more difficult opponents.

Vehicle Descriptions

Living Mount – everything from a horse to an eight-legged trained insect

Personal – a typical family or personal car

Sports Personal – probably painted red with sexy lines, this is for the single people who like to show off

Explorer – a vehicle designed for new colonies or for traversing rough ground in backwater regions

Truck – standard large vehicle capable of carrying big loads

Passenger Bus – designed to carry a large number of passengers

Scout – used on new colonies by government departments and organisations, it is capable of traversing difficult terrain

Armoured Car – a heavier version of the Scout used by armed forces

Assault Platform – the standard tank size combat vehicle that comes in tracked, wheeled, anti-grav and airborne versions

Battle Platform – designed as support for armoured units, these very large combat vehicles carry heavy weaponry and may have troop carrying facilities inside their huge structures

War Platform – the ultimate war machines, these massive vehicles are as a big as a large building and carry huge firepower, troops and specialized equipment. They are often the focal point of a battle

Characters vs. Vehicles

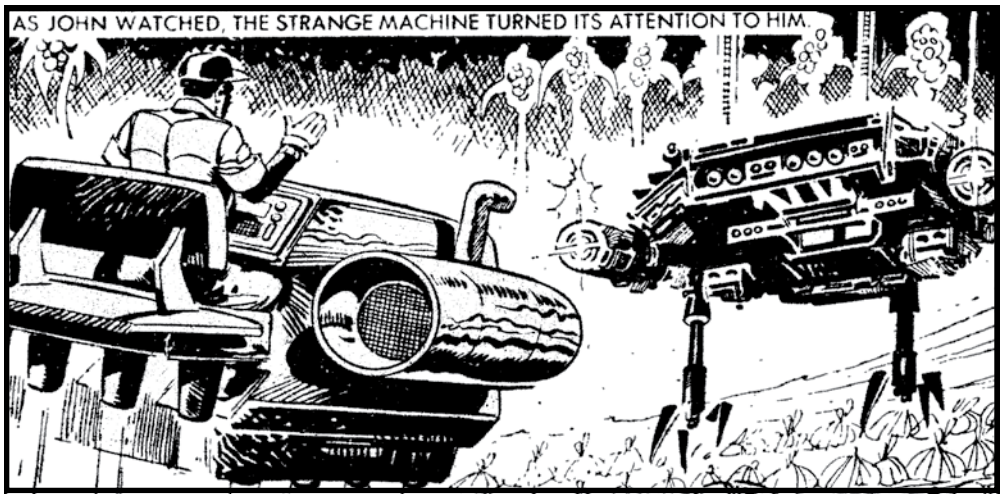
Movement

Characters obviously can not keep up with vehicles but in the first round involving characters in a vehicle and characters on foot, a character on foot can attempt to catch a vehicle with a quick sprint. Their Athletics Skill would be at -2 to a mounted character and -4 against a normal ground vehicle. Characters have no hope of catching an anti-grav or aerospace vehicle. Mounted characters are at -2 to a vehicle and the fastest vehicle will win in a long distance race.

Combat

Characters can attempt to shoot vehicles that are within two scales of themselves and passengers in vehicles can use vehicle weapons to shoot at targets up to two Scales greater or smaller than themselves.

B



Gunners in vehicles may use their Starship Gunnery Skill in place of the vehicle's weapon Skill if it is greater. As with Starships (Chapter 21), use the highest Skill level of a weapon system and on a successful hit, any extra weapon Skills of the same type (energy, projectile or exotic) add their Skill levels as bonus stress to the target. Vehicle combat should follow the same format as Starship conflict. See Chapter 21 for more information.

Vehicle Skills

Vehicles can be assigned some limited Skills from the selection below to represent their abilities. See the Starship Skills chapter for details on each Skill. Restricted Skills can only be assigned to military or security agency vehicles unless the Story Teller makes an exception. Alternatively the Story Teller can assign a difficulty of the desired Skill level plus 2 as the Resource Skill check to acquire this piece of equipment once a potential supplier is found (smuggler, pirates, rebels, etc).

Weapons (Restricted Skill). Choose Beam or Projectile Weapons as mounted weapons but each must be controlled by a character to be used and is fired separately

Manoeuvre. Use this instead of speed for defensive manoeuvring against attacks, all terrain abilities, chase scenes and climbing slopes where a Skill check is required.

Armour. Provides a reduction to projectile and physical stress damage and the ability to take some consequences.

Energy Shields (Restricted Skill). Provides a reduction to energy weapon stress damage and the ability to take some consequences.

Reflective Armour. Provides a reduction to energy weapon stress damage and ability to take some consequences.

Ship Systems or 'Vehicle Systems'. Details the security, sensor and communications range of the vehicle. Skill only allowed for vehicles of scale 3 and larger.

Dropship or Troop Carrier Facilities (Restricted Skill). Facilities to support ground troops who can disembark through ramps, drop shoots or various portals in the vehicle. Each Skill level supports one ten-man squad of the same Skill level.

Other Starship System Skills could also be assigned including Cargo Hold, Repair Systems, Targeting computer and Electronic Warfare Suite, See Chapter 19 for full details.

Special Vehicle Skills

These can be chosen instead of the choices of Starship Skills listed above to create a flying vehicle.

Anti-gravity model. Avoids terrain effects.

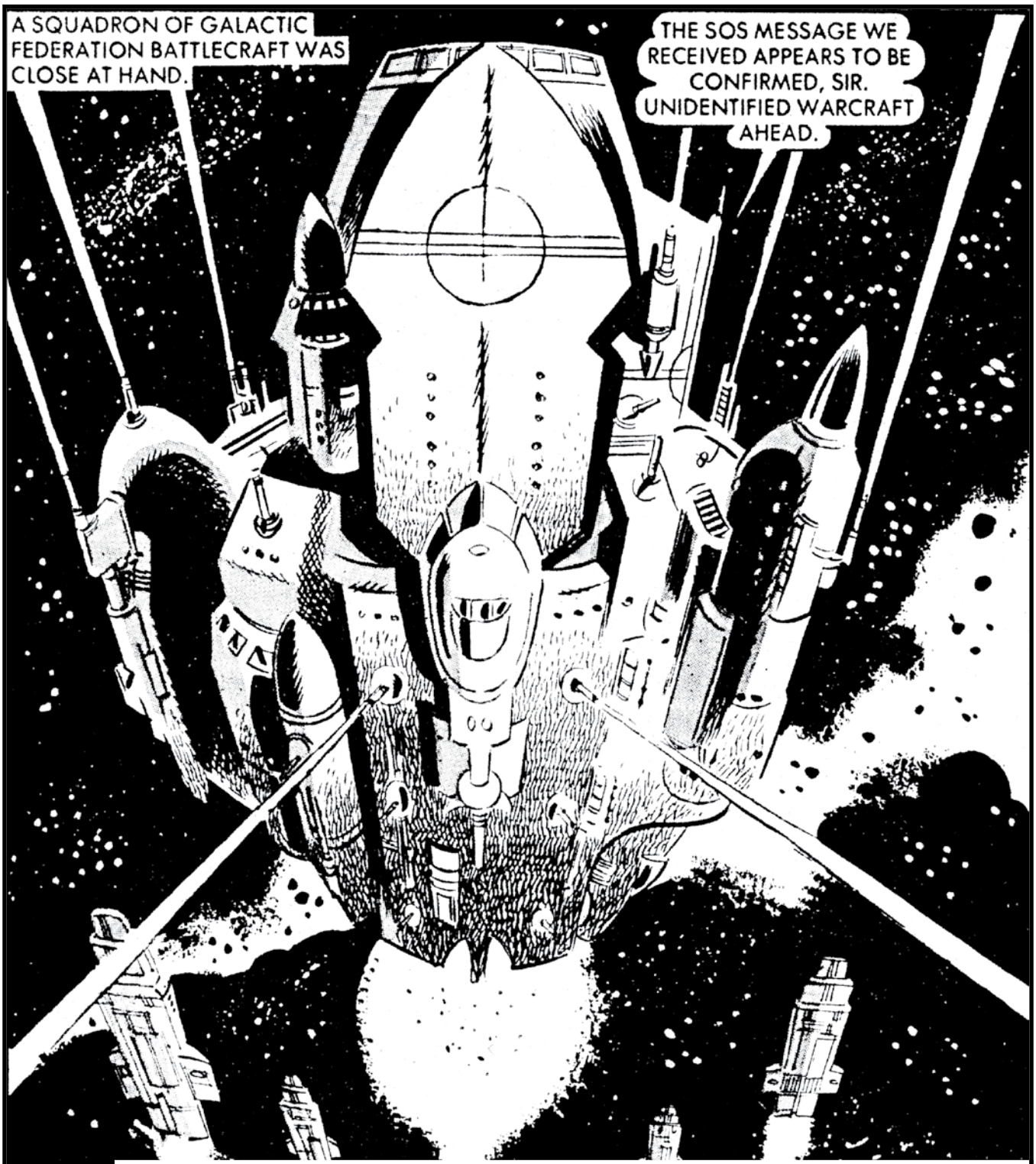
Aerospace Civilian Model. Avoids terrain effects, increases Speed by +1.

Aerospace Military Model (Restricted Skill). Avoids terrain effects, increases Speed by +2.

Terrain Effects on movement

Terrain can modify a vehicle's Speed for purposes of chase scenes or reaching a destination in time. Use the following modifiers to the Speed Skill roll if the terrain that needs to be crossed mainly consists of:

Urban / Woodland	-1
Forest / Hills	-2
Swamp / Jungle / Mountains	-3
Highway	+1


A SQUADRON OF GALACTIC FEDERATION BATTLECRAFT WAS CLOSE AT HAND.
THE SOS MESSAGE WE RECEIVED APPEARS TO BE CONFIRMED, SIR. UNIDENTIFIED WARCRAFT AHEAD.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Starship Creation

Starship Creation

If you get the opportunity to read many of the original Starblazer issues, you will notice that a large part of the Starblazer tales involve Starships of one form or another. Chances are that your adventure will involve the Story Teller either giving you a Starship or allowing you to create one.

The following chapter gives you guidelines on how to use Starship in Starblazer Adventures including guidelines for players and Story Tellers on creating your own Starships, full details of Starship systems in the form of Skills and Stunts, Starship conflicts and manoeuvres and a list of typical Starship templates to get you started.

Obviously, we could go into minute detail, covering intricate details and listing specific rules for specific Aspects of Starships, but since this goes against the nature of *Starblazer Adventures* (less rules, more story telling), use common sense for something not specifically stated here.

Abbreviations Used

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ECM	Electronic Counter Measures
EW	Electronic Warfare
FTL	Faster-Than-Light
PCS	Protected Crew Stations
SL	Sub-Light

Designing Starships

Okay you remember how to create a character? Well it's no different with ships; players actually come up with their ship's history, Skills, Aspects and Stunts during character creation.

This process is a collaborative effort with each player taking it in turn to contribute to the ships history over the course of several Starblazer Legends, and coming up with Aspects together.

This could even inspire player character Aspects – for example:

Player 1: In my phase, we encountered a derelict alien ship and discovered a mysterious power source. We hooked it up to the FTL Drive to see what would happen and ended up halfway across the galaxy! It took us months to get back! So I'm giving the ship the "Powered by Mysterious Alien Artifact" Aspect.

Player 2: Cool! Let's say that during that long voyage home, my character's fiancé gave him up for dead and married the corrupt planetary leader on his homeworld. My character is taking the "My Girlfriend Married a Bad Guy Because of this Damn Ship" Aspect.

You can pick a ready made ship from the Starship Template chapter or create a ship using the following guidelines.

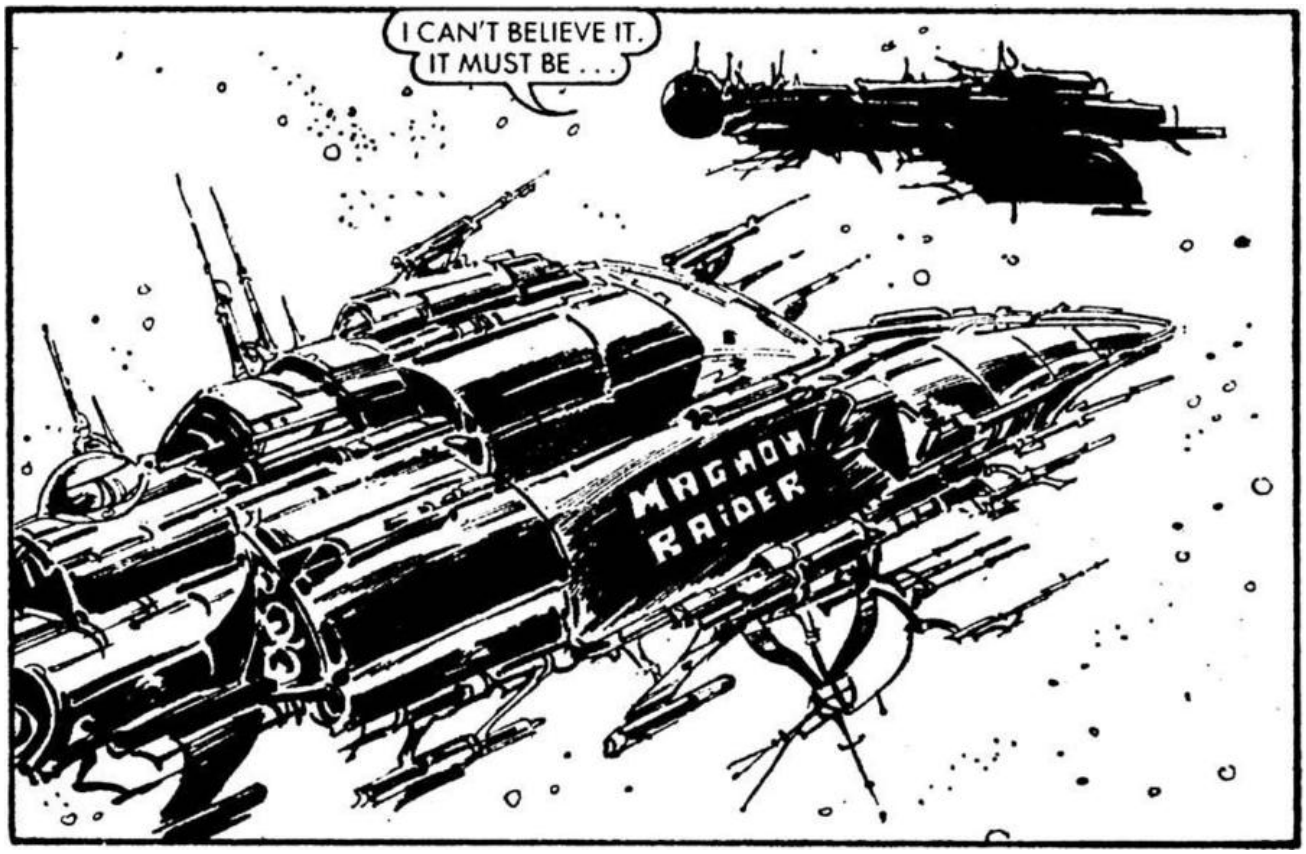
Starship Creation Steps

Starship creation takes place using 6 steps listed below. The process is the same for both players and the Story Teller, though some steps differ slightly between the two, and step 2 is optional for the Story Teller (any Story Tellers out there want to create full backgrounds and histories for every ship their players are going to encounter...? didn't think so...).

1. Select the ship Scale factor (see the Scale table on page 65)
2. Detail the ships background & Aspects via phases
3. Select the Skills your ship is equipped with
4. Choose or create Stunts related to the Skills chosen in step 3.
5. Establish Fate points
6. Give it a name

1. Scale Factor

Have a look at the Scale table on page 65 and decide how large you want the ship to be (the Story Teller may restrict the maximum size that can be selected). Use the table below to determine the size of the Skill pyramid, number of points on each stress track the ship can take. All ships may take up to three consequences from Minor, Major, Severe or Extreme.



2. Ship Background, History & Aspects

To start with, players agree on the origin of the ship, it's concept, and the design theme, i.e. where the ship was constructed, who designed it, who built it , if was built for an organisation, government, individual etc, why it was built and so on. The ships first Aspect should come from this.

Once all that has been agreed on, players should then cover the events of the ships shakedown cruise and its first Starblazer Legend. This could be something like "broke the speed record for the Talurian Test Circuit the first time she went out". The ships second Aspect should come from this.

Players then take it in turns to describe subsequent missions and legends the ship participated in. This could involve different owners, crews etc, major battles the ship took part in (or ran away from), a famous act of piracy and so on: your imagination is the limiting factor here (and the ever present discretion of the Story Teller). Each such incident should yield another Aspect of the ship. Keep going until the ship has reached its maximum number of Aspects (or the players do not want to add any more).

Remember, the most interesting Aspects are the most useful and effective. Aspects are interesting if there are notable opportunities to both invoke (by spending Fate Points) and compel (to receive Fate Points) during a given game session.

Players are free to (and encouraged to) come up with their own Aspects, however, we have included two lists of suggested Aspects, one with descriptions and suggested uses, the other with just the titles. These can be found on page 334. Other ideas can also be found on the Starblazer Adventures forums

www.starblazeradventures.com

3. Ship Skills

Players must now select the number of ship Skills specified by the Skills pyramid in step 1 (just as with Character Creation). There are three sets of Skills: general, offensive, defensive. There is no limit on the number of Skills that can taken from each set, but there are restrictions on the number of times individual Skills can be selected and how high a level they can be selected at (e.g. Ablative and Reflective Armour and Energy Shields which can only be selected once, and cannot be of a Skill level higher than Good(+3). See below for general information on Starship Skills or Chapter 19 Starship Systems, Skills and Stunts.

A player character ship can be created with the suggested Skill pyramid for that ship scale or you can assign Skills using the Skill points detailed on the table just like normal character creation. Remember each level of the pyramid must have one more Skill than the level above.

For example a Medium (3) Scale Fighter has a Skill point total of 4 so it could have 4 Average (+1) Skills instead of the suggested 2 Average (+1) and 1 Fair (+2) Skills.

When players want to expand or add Skills to their ship, they are limited to the Skill point value of a ship that is the next scale up. For example Brandon and Astraade's Large (4) Scale medium freighter is limited to a maximum of 16 Skill points (i.e. the Skills points of a Large (4) Advanced Scale ship.

See Ship Advancement on page 362 for detail of how to add Skills to your ship.

4. Stunts

Now the Skills have been chosen, players now select a number of Stunts. The ship may have as many Stunts as you wish but the ship's Fate point Refresh is reduced by 1 for each Stunt taken. Only Stunts that are connected to the Skills chosen in step 3 may be selected, and each Stunt can only be selected once. If players have any ideas for new Stunts that relate to any of their chosen Skills and the Story Teller agrees to them, these can be added to the list of Stunts that may be chosen.

For the player character's ship(s), there is also a Stunt bonus related to the level of the Ship Systems Skill. These additional Stunts do not reduce the Fate point Refresh. The character's ship gains an extra number of Stunts equal to its Ship System Skill level. For example the players have created a Frigate (Huge (5) Scale) with 5 Stunts and therefore a Refresh of 5 Fate Points. If the ship had a Good(+3) Ship Systems Skill, the ship will gain an additional 3 Stunts for a total of 8 Stunts with a Refresh of 5.

This does not apply to Medium (3) Scale ships that do not have the Ship Systems Skill. All the ships listed in the Starship Templates (page 370) do not have this bonus applied. If players choose one of these stock Starships, they get to add the bonus Stunts themselves.

Story Tellers may add the Stunt bonus to significant threat ships as well, making them that little bit more challenging. See Chapter 19 Starship Systems, Skills and Stunts.

. . . SOL 117's TAPES SHOW THAT SHE WAS DAMAGED BY A BURST OF NEUTRON ENERGY BIGGER THAN ANYTHING WE COULD MUSTER . . . AND THE BLAST CAME FROM BEYOND THE BARRIER.
THE BARRIER WAS AN IMPENETRABLE FORCE FIELD ON THE RIM OF THE GALAXY.

5. Fate points

Just as for characters, the ship has a Fate Point refresh level. This is a simple calculation. Deduct the base number of Stunts (i.e. in the case of player's ship, the number of Stunts before the bonus is added) from 10. For example, if a ship has a core of 3 Stunts, plus a bonus of an additional 3 Stunts because its Ship Systems Skill is Good(+3). The ship gets a Fate Point refresh of 7 since the total is determined using the pre-bonus number of Stunts.

6. Naming Ceremony

Finally, the ship needs a name. What and how you name it we leave to you...

Stress Tracks & Consequences

Ships have two Stress tracks: Structural Stress representing the damage that can be taken by the structure of the ship, and Ship Systems Stress which represent damage that control systems managing the major functions of the ship can take. These include life support, sensors, central computer etc. Ships can take consequences to reduce stress which then affects the ships performance and can be tagged.

Medium Scale (3) ships have 3 Structural and 3 System stress whilst all larger ships have the standard 5 structural stress and 5 system stress (just like characters have 5 physical and 5 composure stress). This can be increased through taking Skills like the Hardened Structure or Hardened Ship Systems Stunt.

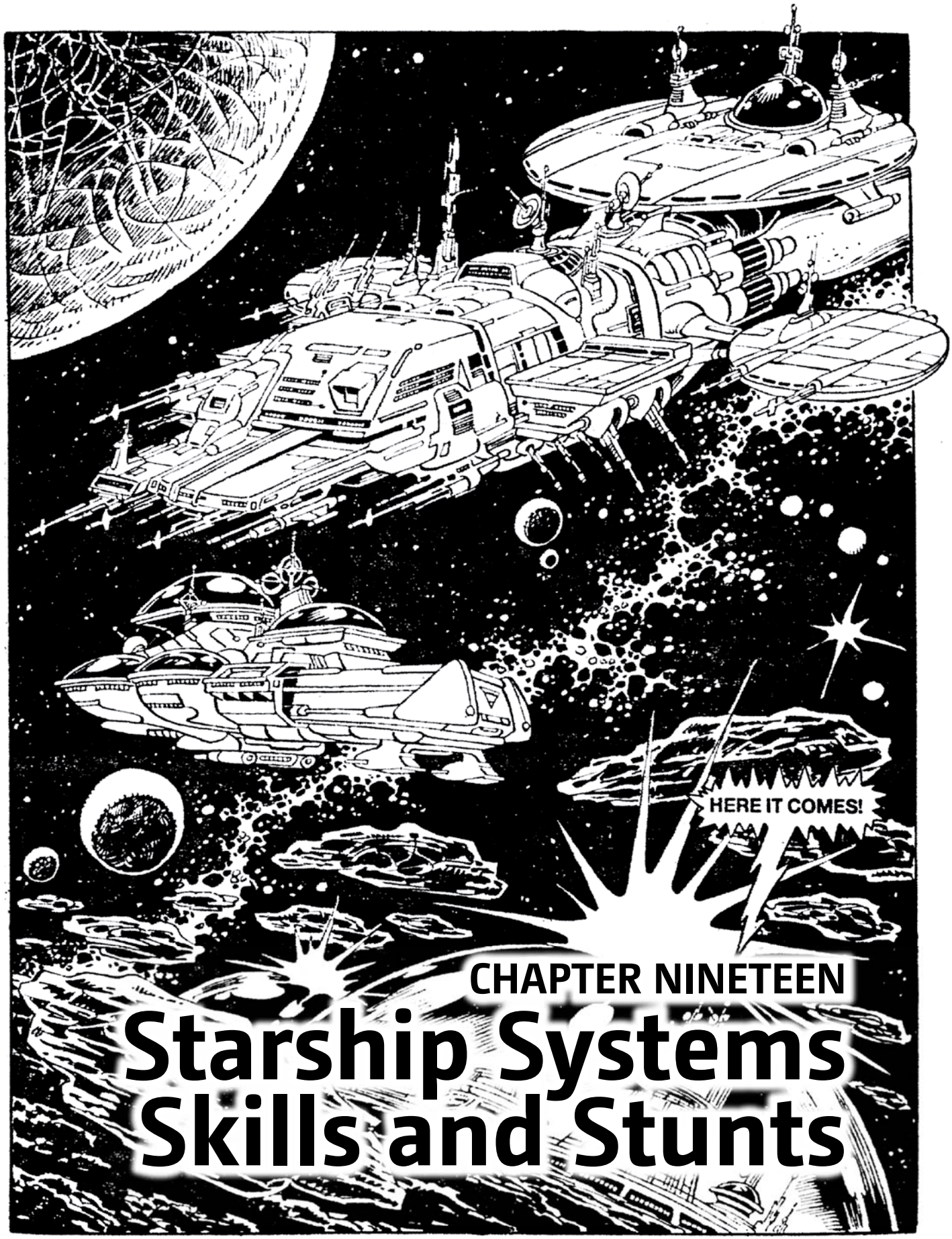
See the Starship Templates on page 370 for some examples.

Starship Scale Table

Scale	Structural Stress	Systems Stress	Typical Skills Pyramid	Skill Points	Aspects
Medium(3) Scoutships, fighters, bombers, small freighters, shuttles	3	3	**F** **A A**	4	3
Medium(3) Advanced Scoutships, fighters, bombers, small freighters, shuttles	3	3	**F F** **A A A**	7	3
Large(4) Medium freighters, gunboats, patrol ships	5	5	**G** **F F** **A A A**	10	4
Large(4) Advanced Medium freighters, gunboats, patrol ships	5	5	**G G** **F F F** **A A A A**	16	4
Huge(5) Small capital ships, cruisers, frigates, destroyers, large freighters, small space stations	5	5	**G G** **F F F F** **A A A A A A**	20	5
Huge(5) Advanced Medium capital ships, cruisers, frigates, destroyers, large freighters, small space stations	5	5	**Gt Gt** **G G G** **F F F F** **A A A A A**	30	5
Enormous(6) Large capital ships, carriers, battle-ships, medium space stations	5	5	**S** **Gt Gt** **G G G** **F F F F** **A A A A A**	35	6
Enormous(6) Advanced Large capital ships, carriers, battle-ships, medium space stations	5	5	**S S** **Gt Gt Gt** **G G G G** **F F F F F** **A A A A A A**	50	6
Colossal(7) Large space stations, smaller colony ships	5	5	**Ft** **S S** **Gt Gt Gt** **G G G G** **F F F F F** **A A A A A A**	56	7
Colossal(7) Advanced Large space stations, larger colony ships	5	5	**Ft Ft** **S S S** **Gt Gt Gt Gt** **G G G G G** **F F F F F F** **A A A A A A A**	77	7

Skills Key: A – Average F – Fair G – Good Gt – Great S – Superb Ft-Fantastic E – Epic L - Legendary

We do not list any Scales here above Colossal(7) as this is the largest Scale for a Starship. Anything ship like objects larger than this will come under the *Large Threats* section in Chapter 15. For Ship Advancement the maximum Skills point for a Colossal Scale (7) Advanced ship or space station is 84.



CHAPTER NINETEEN

Starship Systems Skills and Stunts

THE VESSEL IS A BAGULUN-CLASS FREIGHTER WHICH APPROACHES ON ION-DRIVE AND SHOULD AT ITS PRESENT PROGRESS BE WITH US IN SIXTEEN STANDARD MINUTES.

Ship Skills & Stunts

Starships are broken down into various systems represented by ships Skills. Some Skills cover more than one system whilst others can be selected more than once. For all these systems, the higher the level of the Skill governing them, the more advanced or powerful the system is.

Skills are used to represent certain parts of the a Starship, such as cargo bays, computer systems, weapons systems, stardrives and so on and are placed in a Skills pyramid in exactly the same way as with characters. Most Skills can be placed in any position in the ships Skills pyramid unless stated in the Skill description.

For Starships, there is a mandatory set of Skills required:

- All ships are required to have the Manoeuvre Skill.
- All ships with a Scale of Large(4) or greater must also have the Ship Systems Skill
- All ships of Scale Enormous(6) or larger must also have at least one Flight Bay Skill.

Stunts represent specialised equipment or enhancements to ships systems. They allow you to temporarily break the rules of the game and give bonuses in situations. Sometimes they will be specific situations or may require a Skill check or even expenditure of a Fate Point for particularly powerful Stunts.

Skill & Stunt Limitations

As with character equipment, some ship Skills or Stunts are restricted to those with the following Career Aspects; Sci-Tech, Security, Military or Pirate/Rebel. Practically speaking this means that the character who's Resource Skill is being used for the purchase must have the necessary Aspect. Restricted ship Skills and Stunts are marked with an asterisk*

Stress Absorption by Skills (Consequences)

Certain Skills are able to take consequences in place of damage to one of the stress tracks. Players may elect to take a consequence on one of these systems at any time stress is inflicted on one of the stress tracks. Such systems are not able to be appointed above a Skill level of Good(+3) and can only absorb stress for one

of the stress tracks (detailed in the Skill description). Once one of these Skills has taken its full quota of consequences, no further damage may be absorbed in this way and the equipment it represents is deemed inoperable so any modifiers or bonuses it grants can no longer be used.

The amount of stress one of these Skills can absorb depends on its level:

Skill Level	Consequences
Average(+1)	1 x Minor
Fair(+2)	1 x Minor, 1 x Major
Good(+3)	1 x Minor, 1 x Major, 1 x Severe

The Skill can absorb two points of stress for each Minor consequence it takes, four points of stress for every Major consequence and six points of stress for every Severe consequence. A ship must always take a consequence if it can in order to avoid taking damage capable of reducing the stress track to zero.

As an example, a ship equipped with Fair(+2) Ablative Armour is hit by a Great(+4) projectile weapon. The armour would normally absorb 2 points of damage leaving 2 points of damage to go on the ships Structural Stress Track. The players could then elect to reduce this to 0 damage by taking a Minor consequence to the Ablative Armour. Were the damage inflicted 10 stress points, crew could elect to absorb 2 points through the Minor consequence, and 4 points of stress damage by taking a Major consequence to the armour, leaving 6 points of stress damage for the ships stress track and ship consequences to absorb. Since this is the full quota of consequences, no further damage can be absorbed by the armour and the armour suffers from these consequences until repaired.

Ship consequences work similar to consequences for characters. A ship is taken out if it must take more than three consequences or fills up either of its stress tracks, and consequences can be tagged as Aspects. Ship consequences are different in a couple of ways. First off, consequences to ships do not heal over time, but must be repaired. Secondly, when a character accepts a consequence he may make the consequence "non-tagable" by designating some system of the ship as being out of commission, such as a weapon system, the hyperdrive, sub-light engines. Each level of consequence on a system which is tagable treats the Skill level of the system as if it was one level less. The reduction remains until the damage has been repaired.

For example if the Star Patrol ship *Centauri Revenge* takes a major consequence to its Stardrive then the Stardrive Skill of Good (+3) is treated as Average (+1) until repaired.

Distance and Range

You will often have to determine how far a ship can travel with its stardrive or how far the communications system can reach. The range or distance is determined by the level of its relevant Skill (Ship Systems for communication, Stardrive for FTL travel). This does not apply to weapons and defensive weapons (see *Starship Combat* on page 347).

Use this table when you need to determine the range or distance concerning the use of a ships system.

Skill Level	Range / Distance
Terrible	Anywhere within the current star system
Poor	Half way to the next star system
Mediocre	Any neighbouring star system
Average	Two or three star systems away
Fair	Several star systems away
Good	Halfway across the current galaxy
Great	Anywhere in the current galaxy
Superb	Any neighbouring galaxy
Fantastic	Up to several galaxies away
Epic	Countless galaxies away
Legendary	Any point in the known Universe

Whilst Skills never start with the level Terrible or Poor, they are included here to give you a gauge of how a reduction in the Skill level as a consequence could be used, for example to represent a damaged FTL drive.

General Ship Skills

These are the Skills your ship may be equipped with. Each Skill explains what the ship or crew can use it for and what Stunts are available. Stunts represent additional systems, modules or perhaps software that upgrades the Skill and are only available if the ship has this Skill.

Suggested Stunts are listed but if you can think of any more and the Story Teller agrees, you are free to use them. If you make up a new ship Stunt, try to stick to the general rule that a Stunt should allow a certain ability that does not apply modifiers (for example the ability to jettison cargo), a +1 modifier in some situations or a +2 modifier in select situations. Powerful Stunts should also require another Stunt as a pre-requisite. Use the character Stunts (chapter 8) as a general guide to creating ship Stunts.

Unlike character Skills, a ship without a certain Skill may not use it at Mediocre (+0). If a ship does not have a Skill, it does not have the equipment. Where Skill checks are mentioned, they are assumed to be made using the relevant Skill in question.

Advanced Sensor Suite	**Mining Equipment**
Cargo Hold	**Repair Systems**
Flight Bay	**Salvage System**
Grappling System	**Ships Systems**

Advanced Sensor Suite

The ship has an enhanced sensor system. This allows scanning at extended ranges if the Skill level is higher than the Ship System Skill and gives the ability to detect objects such as cloaked ships that would be hidden from a standard sensor suite. Skill level determines the difficulty of the object the suite is capable of detecting.

For example the Star Patrol ship Centauri Revenge has an Advanced Sensor Suite at Good (+3). It can detect objects with a hidden difficulty of up to Good (+3) just by looking, whilst better hidden objects require a Skill check.

As with normal sensors, the sensor range is a number of zones equal to the Skill level and all Skill checks relating to sensors are made using this Skill instead (if higher than the Ship Systems Skill). To detect a cloaked ship make a Skill check against the target ship's Ship System Skill as usual but deduct the Skill level of he Cloaking system from the Advanced Sensor Suite Skill. See the Cloaking System Skill on page 331 for more details. A ship may only have a single Advanced Sensor Suite Skill.

Stunts

✧***Track FTL***

This allows the ship to accurately trace the direction and destination of a ship making an FTL jump. The ship or pilot can pay a Fate point and get a reasonable estimate at the direction of a blind jump escape manoeuvre. A test against the Stardrive Skill level of the escaping ship must be made to get a trace.

✧***Military Sensor Suite* (Restricted)***

This provides a bonus of +4 to Advanced Sensor Suite Skill checks when trying to detect cloaked ships or ships with weapon systems of Great (+4) Skill level or greater. This also allows the ship to try to detect ships using a Shroud Generator but without the Skill level of the Shroud Generator deducted from the Advanced Sensor Suite Skill level prior to the Skill check. The Shroud Generator also negates the Military Sensor Suite +4 bonus.

Cargo Hold

The ship has a cargo hold capable of storing more than the typical equipment and crews belongings. As a general rule, the cargo hold can carry ten units of resources each with a value of the cargo hold's Skill level. For example a Good (+3) cargo hold can carry ten resources to the value of Good (+3) each. Story Teller's should feel free to amend this in certain circumstances. For example carrying ultra valuable artefacts takes up less space than large loads of common minerals.

Stunts

✧***Cargo Jettison Plates***

Explosive bolts on external hull plates allow the crew to quickly jettison their cargo, a Cargo Hold Skill check is required against a difficulty of Average (+1) which could be modified by circumstances such as urgency, or movement of the ship, etc

✧***Dangerous Cargo Containment***

The hold is capable of transporting hazardous cargoes such as radioactive materials, explosives etc. In the

event of the Cargo Hold taking damage in the form of a Consequence while using this Stunt, a Skill check would be required to maintain containment. The difficulty would be the amount of stress inflicted to cause the consequence. For example if a ship took 5 stress and took a Major Consequence on the Cargo Hold then the difficulty would be Superb (+5). On failure, the ship would take the difference in stress damage and further possible events could unfold depending on the cargo.

✧*Livestock Area*

This is capable of transporting livestock safely. Typically 50 Earth horse size animals per Skill level can be carried per Cargo Hold Skill level. . If the Cargo Hold takes a Consequence then it will require immediate repair or 5 animals will die every turn.

✧*Stasis Pods*

The ship is capable of transporting lifeforms [humans or otherwise] held in stasis pods. 500 lifeforms per Skill level can be carried. If the Cargo Hold takes a Consequence then the stasis pods control system will require immediate repair or 5 lifeforms will die every turn.

✧*Passenger Quarters*

The ship is capable of supporting the demanding requirements of a large number of passengers. The Skill level reflects the quality and quantity of berths with a rough guide being 100 passengers per Skill level in rows of seating for journeys of up to 24 hours or 30 passengers in staterooms per Skill level for longer journeys. Some space is dedicated to recreation and amenities.

✧***Cargo Pods***

The ship is able to attach cargo containers to its exterior. This allows the ship to carry 10 times its internal cargo hold value but makes the ship particularly unwieldy. This is particularly useful for freighters carrying massive loads between major star systems. Cargo Pods reduces the Manoeuvre Drive Skill level by 3 for all combat related Skill checks and all manoeuvres must be planned with plenty of time. For example a ship with a Good (+3) cargo hold and the Cargo Pods Stunt can carry 100 (10 x 10 resources) resources each with a value of Good (+3).

Flight Bay

The shipped is equipped with a flight bay capable of housing, launching, landing and maintaining a number of fighters or shuttles. The ship can carry one fighter or shuttle for every Skill level. Each flight bay is capable of launching a single shuttle or fighter per turn.

Stunts

✧***Quick Launch***

The flight bay is equipped with special slingshot systems to launch all craft in each flight bay simultaneously. A ship does not have to launch its full complement of craft.

✧***Fighter Recovery***

The flight bay is equipped to enable the ship to recover stranded fighters shuttles in the same zone as itself by "scooping them up" in open space. The ship can recover one stranded fighter or shuttle per Skill level each turn.

✧***Carrier Bays***

Requires Quick Launch Stunt

The ship has large internal hangar bays for holding fighter squadrons which use the Flight Bay as a launching platform. This doubles the capacity of all Flight Bays but can only be assigned to ships of Scale Huge(5) or larger.

Grappling System

Grappling systems covers a wide range of technologies ranging from 'tractor' beams to bizarre metallic tentacles. This allows the ship to physically grapple or tractor a target object into the same zone as itself. The Skill level determines the grappling ability (rolled versus the Manoeuvre Skill of the target). The maximum size of any objects the ship can grapple is the ship's size Scale minus 2 (e.g. a frigate Scale Huge(5) can grapple anything up to Scale Medium(3) such as a scout ship). A grappling system counts as a weapon system in terms of effective range (see Starship combat later).

Stunts

✧***Fighter Retrieval***

The grappling system is capable of safely dragging fighters and shuttles (one per Skill level) into a flight bay. The system can also be reversed to fend off boarding capsules by making a Skill check verses the Manoeuvre Skill of the boarding capsule)

Mining Equipment

Requires Starship Systems Skill & Cargo Hold

This Skill equips the ship with the tools and equipment needed to mine resources (minerals, rare elements, fuels etc) from asteroids, moons or planets. The equipment includes self propelled space borne and planetary robotic mining equipment to extract and return resources to the ship. The system must be controlled by a crew member with the Starship Systems Skill or a crew member with the Mining/ Salvage career Aspect (who can add +1 to Mining Equipment Skill checks).

Resources are detected by using a successful check on Sensors (Ship Systems Skill) or the Advanced Sensor Suite Skill against the quality of the minerals (which should be stated as a Skill level).

To mine the resources, the ship uses the Mining Equipment Skill to make a check against the Resources quality to mine them – a successful result mines the quality of ore and any Shifts generated represent the quantity of loads mined. After this there is no more accessible resources at this location.

For example the Earth Mining Ship *Venus Load* finds an asteroid with Good (+3) quality ore. It makes a check using it's Great (+4) Mining Equipment Skill and gets a result of +4 (i.e. a surplus of +1 over the level of the ore so the ship is able to mine two loads of Good (+3) ore. The ship can carry a total ore quantity and quality based on its cargo hold Skill level. For example a ship with a Good (+3) cargo hold Skill can carry 10 loads of Good (+3) resources.

At a suitable location such as a Starport, space station, or Orbital Refinery the crew can attempt to convert the resources to an equivalent total monetary resources value by making a successful Rapport Skill check against a local merchant's Resolve Skill. If the roll is successful the total shifts achieved are the quantity of resources sold at their Resource quality. If the character fails the 'selling' Rapport Skill check at the destination they have not managed to find a buyer that day and must wait for the next day to try again. If the character fails three times in a row, they cannot find a buyer at this location.

Once sold the resources are converted into bonuses for future Resource Skill checks. Bonuses must be used for individual Resource Skill checks and cannot be combined. For example if Brandon Carter successfully sold 3 loads of Good (+3) minerals he now has three +3 bonuses for future Resource Skill checks. He cannot combine them to be a +9 bonus or a +6 and a +3 bonus but he can allow other characters in the group to use them.

Mining Equipment may only be selected once.

IT'S BATTLE GULF!
BATTLE GULF WAS THE SCENE OF ONE OF THE ALLIANCE FORCES' WORST DEFEATS AT THE HANDS OF THE HAROHIN. COUNTLESS RUINED SHIPS HAD BEEN LEFT TO DRIFT AS A PERMANENT MEMORIAL.

Stunts

✧*Precision Mining*

The Mining Equipment is capable of mining rare or dangerous resources not normally available at the Mining Equipment Skill level. Adds +1 to the number of loads the ship can secure from a single mining site OR can be used to secure a named resource that the Story Teller has deemed rare or dangerous.

✧*Processing Facility*

The ship can process mined resources into something more valuable or useful. Once the mined resources are in the Cargo Hold, on a successful Mining Equipment Skill check the crew can increase the quality of the mined resources by any Shifts generated.

✧*Salvage*

The ship can use the mining equipment to salvage items from wrecks as per the Salvage System Skill but at two Skill levels lower. This requires the Mining Equipment Skill to be of at least Average(+1) level.

Repair System

The presence of a repair system enhances any engineering rolls made by crew members attempting to repair the ship (a crew member with the Starship Engineering Skill is required to use this).

The level of Skill determines the bonus made to the Engineering Skill roll. See page 359 for ship repair and maintenance.

Stunts

✧*Auto Repair*

The ship's computer can control the repair system itself and negates the requirement of a crew member being present. Use the Repair System Skill level with no bonus for the Skill check.

✧*Repair Drones*

Repair Drones allow the crew to attempt remote repairs on another Starship. Both ships must be stationary and this cannot be carried out whilst either ship is under attacked. Auto-Repair can manage Repair Drones as well. Use the Repair System Skill level with no bonus for the Skill check.

Salvage System

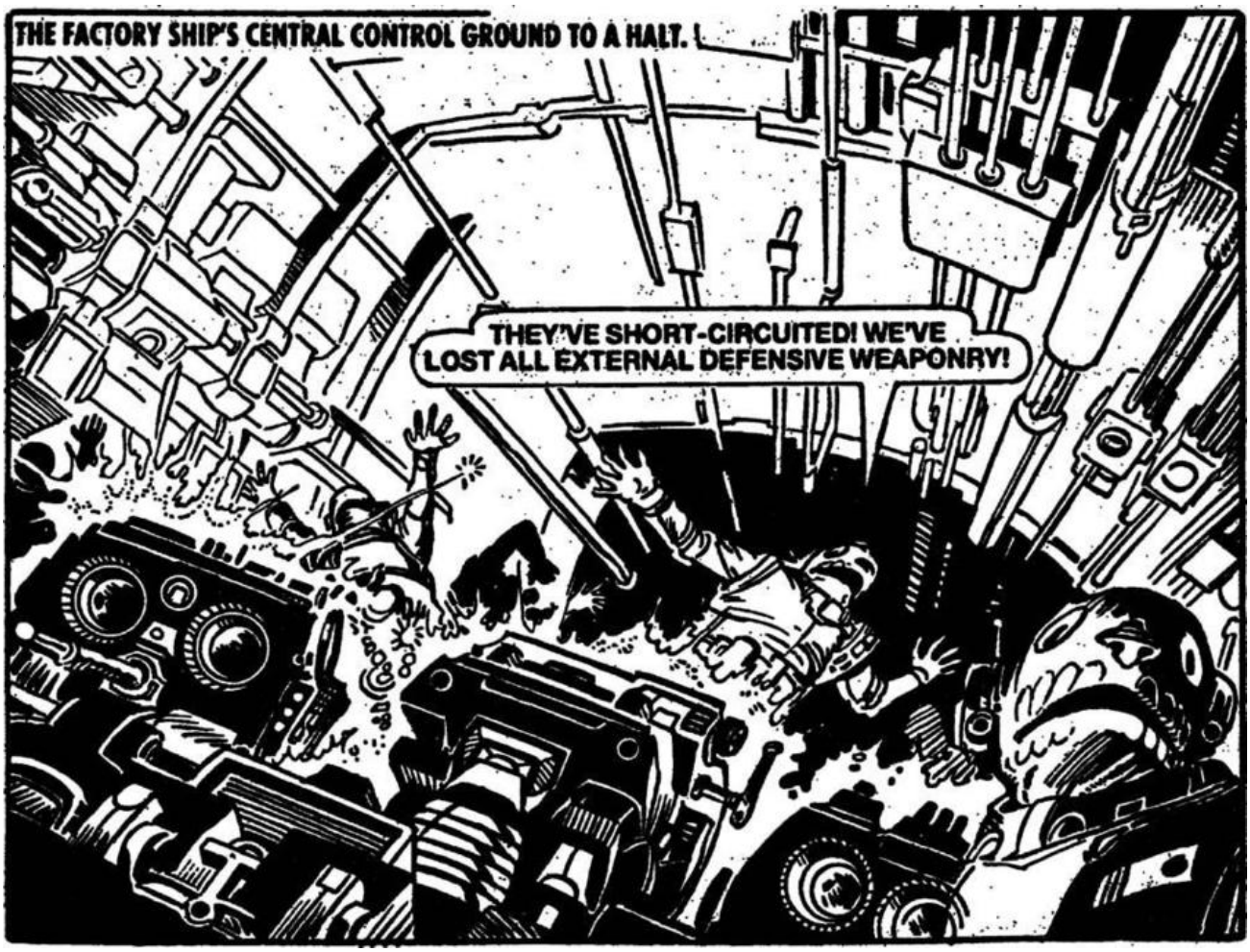
Requires the Cargo Bay Skill & Ship Systems Skill

This allows the crew to salvage equipment and cargo from shipwrecks found in space. The Story Teller should assign Resource Quality of potential salvage to wreckage. If you're want to leave it to chance roll the dice and take any positive result as the Skill level, otherwise there is nothing of value present.

On a successful Salvage System Skill check against the quality of salvage, the ship causes the Skill level of additional stress to the target by removing the salvage. This may cause the remains of the wreck to break up or even explode. The Story Teller should assign an amount of stress and remaining consequences to the wreck. If successful the ship recovers a quantity of salvage at the salvage value equivalent to the Shifts generated. Alternatively the crew can pay a Fate point and instead recover one ship Skill of the same value in salvage.

For example if a ship with a Salvage System found some Fair (+2) salvage in a drifting wreck, and achieved two Shifts on the Salvage System Skill check they would recover two units of Fair (+2) salvage. Alternatively the crew could pay a Fate point and convert this to one Fair (+2) ship Skill of their choice – such as a Beam Weapon. The Story Teller must agree on the system or may provide a list of systems that are recoverable.

Treat the salvaged ship Skill as if it has one Major consequence for ship repair times and costs. If the crew decided to take the salvage, it can be converted to Resource Skill check bonuses at starports, space stations and dockyards. The ship may carry a total Resource Quality in salvage equal to its Cargo Hold Skill value x 10. Can only be selected once.



Stunts

✧ *Mining*
The ship can use the salvage equipment to mine resources as per the Mining Equipment Skill but at two Skill levels lower. This requires the Salvage System Skill to be of at least Average(+1) level.

✧*Patch it up*
The crew can pay a Fate Point and use a piece of salvage of at least Fair (+2) value to restore a structural stress point for every level of the Salvage system Skill. This cannot be done during combat and requires a successful salvage operation to provide the necessary salvage. This operation can only be conducted once between visits to a repair yard.

✧*Salvage Alien Technology*
This allows an attempt to salvage ship Skills from Alien wrecks which obviously use unknown technology. Having salvaged them they could then be installed on the character's ship along with interesting side effects...

✧*Salvage Hazardous Items*
Requires Dangerous Cargo Containment Stunt on the Cargo Hold
The salvage equipment is capable of recovering dangerous items such as radioactive sources, ammunition, explosives, volatile fuels, energy sources or bio-hazards. A failure on the Skill check causes an explosion which does the difference in structural stress to the salvaging ship.

A ship without the ability to salvage hazardous items which tries to salvage them does so at great risk. Its Salvage Equipment Skill level will be at -2 and if the ship fails the Skill check it takes the difference in totals in Consequences through the resulting explosion. For example if a ship without this Stunt fails by 2 on it's Salvage System Skill check it will take 2 consequences.

Ships Systems
Ship Systems is a catch all Skill representing the standard facilities and systems found aboard Starships and is compulsory for any Starship of Scale Large(4) or greater. Ships of Scale Medium (3) do not have this Skill, instead they default to Average (+1) Ship Systems for any checks that would have been made against this Skill.

Ship Systems covers the Med-bay, Crew Quarters, Escape Pods, Engineering systems, Ships Computer System, Life Support, Ships Sensors and Communications. This is a general guide, as in most cases it will make sense however in some cases it needs a judgement call by the Story Teller. For example imagine a lonely communications outpost which might have cramped quarters but powerful communications. This should be detailed in the ship or spacestation description.

This Skill is related to the Ship Systems stress track. As stress is inflicted on the stress track, the consequences can affect anything covered by the Ships System Skill. In general, the Ships Systems Skill is the one most non-physical attacks etc will be tested against unless a specific Aspect, Stunt or Skill is available to the crew at a higher level than this Skill. This Skill can only be selected once.

Communication System [Ship Systems]
Covers all ships communications including internal ships comms, ship to ship comms, planetary comms and long range (FTL) comms. Not all ships will have all of these (fighters for example have no use for internal ships comms). The comms ability of the ship is determined by its *Ship Systems* Skill level. Use the Distance and Range table above to determine the range of the comms system based on its Skill level. Attempts to break through interference or jamming to comms are made against this

Crew Quarters. [Ship Systems]
The living area and facilities for the crew. Includes ships galley, washrooms, anything that is part of the everyday living for the crew. Whilst not a critical ship system, if damaged or destroyed, it will affect the crews ability to function over time. The higher the Ship Systems Skill level, the more lavish and spacious the crew quarters are. Ships are assumed to have sufficient crew quarters to accommodate the typical ships complement for that class of ship (you could add Aspects such as "oversized crew quarters" or "cramped living conditions are making my life hell aboard this tin can" to affect this).

Engineering [Ship Systems]
All ships require an energy source of some form or other in order to power its systems. Engineering

covers the power plant and all it's supporting sub-systems. Smaller ships will have a basic automated power plant, capitol ships will have large engineering sections full of redundant systems and require one or more dedicated crew to run and maintain them. The higher the Ship Systems Skill, the more powerful the plant is, the better its redundancy backup, and the larger the crew compliment required to run it.

Escape System [Ship Systems]

Every ship has some form of survival system giving the crew a chance of surviving the ships destruction. Small ships such as scouts and fighters will have an ejection seat for the pilot, larger ships will have escape pods or compartments. Military ships will sometimes have Protected Crew Stations (PCS), which is a separate defensive Skill, see page 332. Some of the larger capitol ships may even have entire sections of the inner hull which can be ejected. The crew can also be equipped with specialised space suits designed to keep the wearer alive in space for extended periods (see Space Survival Suit under equipment, page 67).

When a ship is destroyed, the crew may attempt to evacuate the ship as it breaks up (see Crew Evacuation, page 359).

Life Support System [Ships Systems]

Critical system that keeps a ships crew alive. Provides and maintains a habitable environment within the ship, controlling air quality, temperature etc. On larger ships, it also provides artificial gravity. The higher the Ship Systems Skill level, the better the quality of the life support and ability to maintain quality under duress.

Med-bay [Ship Systems]

In order to treat injuries inflicted on the crew, ships need some form of medical facility. In the case of small ships such as shuttles, fighters etc this will consist of a basic medical kit built into the crews flight suits or stored in a compartment. Larger ships will have a proper medical bay. It will include a medical computer system capable of aiding in the diagnosis and treatment of injuries, the higher the Skill level, the better the medical treatment possible. Treat the

Med-bay as the *Science* Skill at the same level as the Ship Systems Skill for medical purposes only, and with the following Stunts:

Ship Systems Skill Level	Med-Bay Facility Stunts
Average(+1)	None
Fair(+2)	Medic
Good(+3)	Medic
Great(+4)	Medic, Doctor
Superb(+5)	Medic, Doctor
Fantastic(+6)	Medic, Doctor, Surgeon
Legendary(+8)	Medic, Doctor, Surgeon

See Medic, Doctor and Surgeon Stunts starting on page 187.

Sensor suite [Ship Systems, Advanced Sensor Suite]

A ship's sensors are used to scan or observe anything around them (including space itself). There are two kinds of sensors, active (send) and passive (scans for incoming signals either directly from an object or from reflections of signals off the object derived from another source without revealing the presence of your ship).

Depending on the Skill level, and any appropriate Stunts, sensors cover signals encompassing the entire electromagnetic spectrum, gravitational effects, particle emissions (tachyons, neutrinos etc). All ships have a standard sensor package that is covered by the Ship Systems Skill. The higher the Skill level, the more sensitive the scanners are, enabling them to detect objects more difficult to find. They can also be fitted with an advanced sensor suite which greatly improves the sensitivity of the sensors and grants access to specialised Stunts (see the Advanced Sensor Suite under General Ship Skills, page 314).

See Target/Object Detection under Starship Combat (page 348) for details on making sensor attempts.

Ships Computer [Ship Systems]

Central computer system that acts as a control interface between the crew and the ships systems, runs any automated systems onboard, and provides typical support services such as basic targeting, navigation etc. The higher the Ship Systems Skill, the more advanced the computer system. A number of specialist computer systems are available as additional Skills (such as advanced targeting computers).

Stunts

✧*Advanced Med-bay*

The Med-bay is capable of curing heavier consequences suffered by members of the crew. Counts as a Med-bay equivalent to a Ship Systems Skill two levels higher)

✧*Enhanced Communications*

This allows the communications system to penetrate jamming or interference providing the Skill level is at least as high as the ship Skill causing the jamming. It also adds +1 to communications range.

✧*Hardened Ship Systems*

The ship has special military grade systems and receives a bonus of 3 additional stress boxes on the Ship Systems Stress Track

✧*Knowledge base*

The ships computer system also houses a vast library system containing archived knowledge from all over the known galaxies. Pay a Fate point to add the Skill level to any knowledge based Skill checks by crew members.

✧*Reactor Shielding*

The ships power plant has additional shielding allowing it to take an additional Minor consequence but opens the ship's reactor to tags.

✧*Research Computer*

The ships computer is suitable for advanced scientific analysis and is equipped with various automated (and useable by crew members) scientific labs. Pay a Fate point and add the Skill level to any science related Skill checks.

✧*Sensor Probes*

The ship's sensor range can be extended by launching probes which feed scan data back to it as long as it stays within the current star system. Sensor probes can be used in conjunction with the Advanced Sensor Suite Skill. See the Sensor Probe template on page 370 for probe information.

✧*AI Auto-Pilot*

The ship can auto pilot itself from verbal commands by un-Skilled passengers. Crew can take back control at any time. The ship will follow standard protocols , approach vectors, shipping lanes. It will not take risks with passengers and will always try to escape combat as a priority unless this is not possible or unless ordered to fight. All ship Skills act with a -1 Skill level when under AI control.

✧*Long Term Life Support*

The ship is equipped with hydroponics gardens capable of sustaining the ship for very long periods of time or indefinitely with re-supply of water and basic minerals. The system is also capable of providing back up emergency life-support for crew for very short periods of time in the case of failure of the Ship Systems. The period is 1 day for every level of the Ship System Skill.

Propulsion Skills

These Skills cover all the ships manoeuvring and engine systems including manoeuvring thrusters, sub-light (SL) engines, faster-than-light (FTL) engines etc. Any propulsion system that is non-FTL, comes under the *Manoeuvre* Skill, FTL systems come under the Stardrive Skill.

Manoeuvre **FTL Drive**

Stardrive Technology

Different cultures and Starblazer Legends feature different forms of propulsion, both Sub-Light (SL) and Faster-Than-Light (FTL). These forms are often different names for essentially the same thing so rather than list and distinguish these, we categorise drives as one or the other (ships can have both) and give simple descriptions of some of them.

SL Engines

Bussard Ramjet, Ion Drives, Light Sails (aka Solar Sails), Mass Driver Launcher, Plasma Drive, Solid Fuel Rockets, Fusion Rockets.

These are drive systems Starships use to move around solar systems covering inter-planetary distances. This also covers atmospheric drives for those ships capable to atmospheric flight and landing. Sub-light engines are represented by the Manoeuvre Skill which represents how fast and powerful your SL engines are, as well as the combat manoeuvrability of the ship.

Atmospheric flight is a Stunt of the Manoeuvre Skill. Without it, your ship is unable to enter planetary atmospheres or land on a planet.

FTL Systems

Bloater Drive, Deep Space Engines, Hyperdrives, Omega Drives, Warp Drives (aka Time-Warp Drives), Worm Hole Drives, Warp Gates.

This covers the various drive systems different races have used to achieve interstellar and intergalactic travel. They usually involve either spatial warping (warp drives & warp gates), travelling through hyper-space (hyperdrives), using natural wormholes in space, creating artificial wormholes (Worm Hole Drives), or creation of artificial black holes (Omega drives*).

Natural wormholes and warp gates allow ships without FTL to achieve FTL and travel the vast distances between stars and galaxies (ships equipped with a Wormhole Drive can also allow non-FTL ships use of the wormhole they create providing they enter together).

The Skill rating of an FTL drive / wormhole / warp gate determines either the distance that can be travelled before the FTL system needs recharging (FTL drives), the maximum distance of the next warp gate that can be reached (warp gates), or the maximum range of an artificial wormhole exit point (wormhole drives). Use the *Distance and Range* table found on page 313 to get an idea of the distance a ship can jump. Obviously the galactic distribution will allow some variation here (Story Teller's discretion as always). For example, neighbouring galaxies within a cluster will be closer together than neighbouring galaxies elsewhere. Obviously, the navigation system has to know where the destination is in order to jump.

** see Starblazer Issue 1, "The Omega Experiment" if you can find a copy: it tells the story of the Omega drive.*

Manoeuvre

This Skill represents the sub-light drive systems and is a measure of the speed and handling of the ship. It is mandatory for all Starships, and is typically used in defensive manoeuvres against incoming fire, grappling attempts, chases, ramming, obstacle avoidance, etc (i.e. anything that would test against the ship's speed or manoeuvrability). The higher the Skill level, the faster and more manoeuvrable the ship is. This Skill can only be selected once.

Stunts

✧*Afterburner*

The ship can execute a sudden burst of speed to change the zone distance between ships by +2 on top of a normal zone movement. This means the ship must travel at least 3 zones (1 zone move plus 2 Afterburner burst). See Starship Combat movement on page 352). Can only be used once per scene.

✧*Atmospheric Entry*

The ship may enter, land and fly in planetary atmospheres.

✧*Hit & Run*

Requires one other Manoeuvre Stunt

The ship gets a bonus of +1 to attack rolls if moving at least two zones whilst attacking a target. On its next movement it must move away from the target.

✧*Show Your Better Side*

The ships manoeuvring jets are so precise the pilot can quickly turn the ship to present intact armour to attackers. If a ship's Armour Skill has been destroyed through Consequences the pilot can turn the ship to present a scrap of intact armour and gain the armour bonus anyway. Can only be used once per scene.

Star Drive

This Skill imparts the ability of Faster-Than-Light Travel (FTL) on the ship. The Skill level indicates the distance (see the Star Drive Technology section on page 322) the ship can travel in a single "jump", and the accuracy of it's navigation at FTL. This Skill can only be selected once. Without it, a ship is incapable of FTL travel (though it could hitch a ride in the hold / flight bay of a ship or attached to one that does).

Stunts

✧*Blind Jump*

The ship's navigation computer is constantly updating a series of random emergency jump co-ordinates. By paying a Fate point this allows the ship to make an emergency escape manoeuvre using its FTL drive without any navigation computation. The ship jumps to a random location within its FTL range

✧*Overdrive*

This allows the ship to jump as though its Stardrive Skill were one level higher but causes damage to the drive system, placing a "Stressed FTL Drive" Major consequence on the Stardrive which must be repaired. Attempts to make two such jumps without repairs will cause the Stardrive to explode causing an Extreme consequence too the ship.

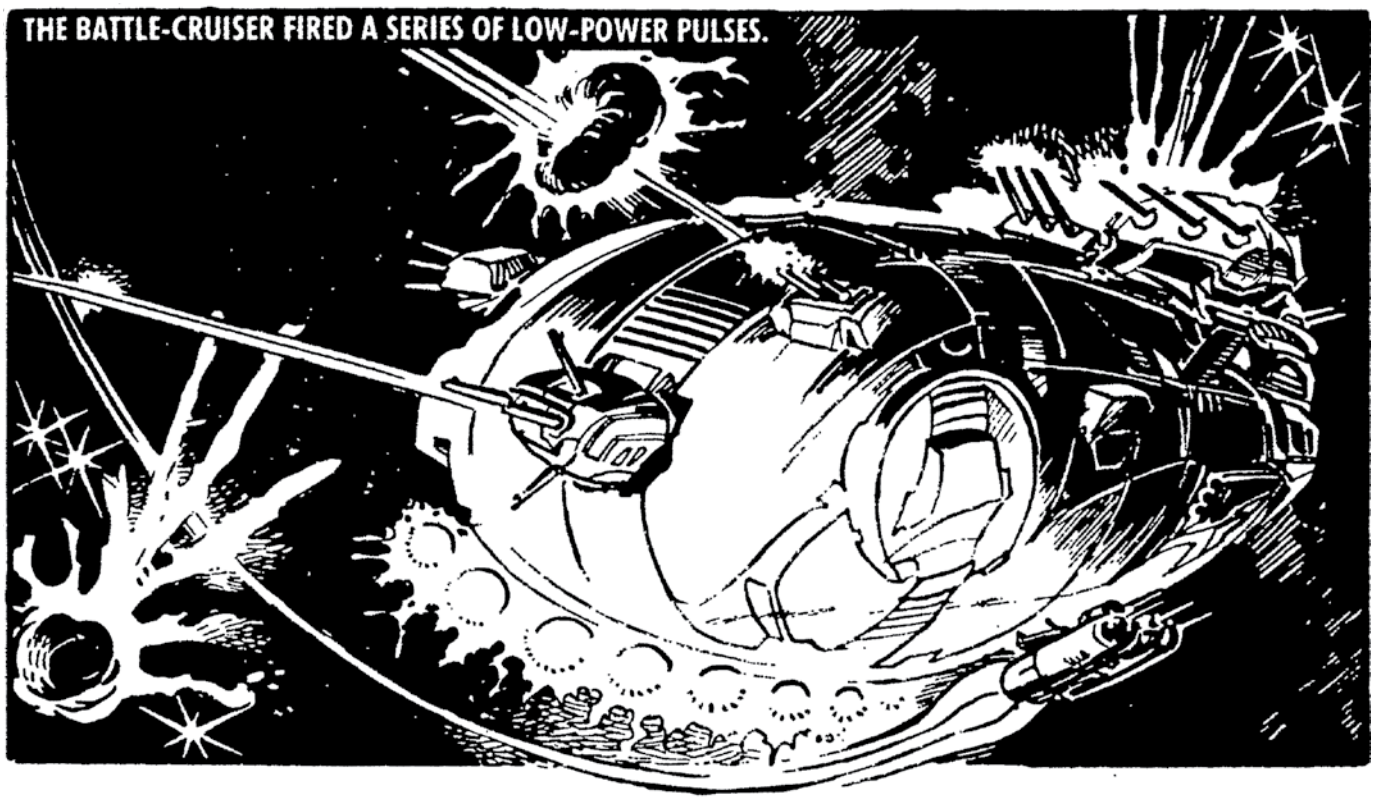
Offensive Ship Skills

Covers all ships Skills that enable the ship to make an attack on another ship. Includes conventional weapons, exotic weapons, marines and support systems that enhance attacks (such as targeting computers). Some of these Skills may be selected more than once, others are restricted.

Beam Weapon	**Plasma Weapon**
Electronic Warfare Suite	**Projectile Weapon**
Exotic Weapon	**Targeting Computer**
FTL inhibitor	**Torpedo Launcher**
Marine Facilities	**Unusual Super-Weapon**

Beam Weapon

Tight beamed energy weapons, covers all forms of lasers etc. Attacking ships use their highest Beam Weapon Skill level for the attack and on a successful hit add the total Skill levels of all other Beam Weapon Skills on the ship.



Stunts

✧***Overload***
This overcomes a target's energy shield or reflective armour with a Skill level less than the attacking beam weapon, but incurs the 'Overheated Beam Weapon' Minor consequence on the ship.

✧***Point Defence***
Point defence is an upgrade to beam systems helping them to target fast moving, objects closing on the ship such as torpedoes or guided missiles instead of normal targets. Make an attack versus the Skill level of the attacking weapon system. On a success a number of torpedoes or guided missiles equivalent to the Skill level of the weapon system are destroyed.

✧***Split Fire***
This fire control system allows a ship with multiple beam weapons to split their fire between different targets instead of having to combine all beam weapons into a single attack.

Electronic Warfare Suite (EWS)

An **EWS** actually counts as both an offensive and defensive system. The EWS is a collection of attack and defence programs and equipment that are non-physical in nature. The EWS Skill may only be selected once and cannot be appointed to a Skill level higher than Good(+3). EWS can be used in several ways including:

Making an EWS attack (in the special action phase of combat) causing direct damage to the targets Ship Systems Stress Track (using advanced automated hacking and computer viruses) rolling against the targets Ship Systems Skill by default or the defending crews highest Starship Systems Skill, whichever is higher.

Jamming a target's communications. Ships with a lower EWS Skill are automatically jammed. To jam communications use the Skill level to test against the target ships EWS or Ship Systems Skill.

Breaking communications jams affecting your ship. Make a Skill check against the jamming ships EWS. A success will break the jamming.

Countering guided ordnance. The ship can attempt to negate the re-rolls granted by the Guided Missiles Stunt or to jam the guidance systems on torpedoes fired using the Torpedo Launcher Skill of an attacking ship. See Torpedoes on page 329 for details of jamming. Defending against incoming EWS attacks if the ships EWS Skill is higher than its Ship Systems Skill. Reducing the damage taken from an incoming EWS attack. Damage reduction is equal to the defending EWS Skill level.

Stunts

✧ ***Advanced EWS* (Restricted)***
This enhances the EWS, enabling it to act as one Skill level higher)

✧ ***Broadband Guidance Jamming***
The EWS may attempt to jam ALL incoming missiles or torpedoes but at one Skill level lower.

Exotic Weapon (Restricted)*

Requires a ship Aspect describing the Exotic weapon

This covers any non-standard normal Scale weapon system that cannot count as beam, projectile or plasma. The weapon should have an Aspect assigned that describes it (e.g. antiparticle cannon with the Aspect "Anti-matter ammunition"). Exotic weapons are typically alien or very experimental in nature and should be hard to come by.

Stunts

✧ ***Split Fire (Exotic)***
A ship with multiple exotic weapons may split them between different targets instead of having to combine them all into a single attack)

✧***Very Exotic***
The weapon system is so exotic than all stress and consequences inflicted by this weapon can only be repaired in repair docks.

FTL Inhibitor

The FTL Inhibitor creates an enormously strong non-destructive gravity well that distorts and locks local space-time in such a way it prevents spatial warping or wormhole creation and effectively disables any stardrives within range of the well. The inhibitor will prevent any ship within range of the well that is equipped with a Stardrive Skill equal to or lower than the Skill level of the inhibitor from engaging its stardrive.

Ships that are already travelling using FTL drives that pass through the generated gravity well and have stardrives with a Skill level less than that of the inhibitor are pulled off course and appear in Zone 4 (see zones later under Starship Combat). If the level of stardrive equals the level of the inhibitor, the ship is sent off course (which in regions of space with a high star density or a system with lots of worlds and moons could get quite interesting). The FTL inhibitor will affect all ships within zones 0 to 4 relative to the inhibitor regardless of whether they have been detected or not. This Skill may only be selected once.

Stunts

✧*System Blockade*

This extends the range of the inhibitor to encompass the entire local solar system for a period of one game day, but burns out the inhibitor in doing so. Treat the inhibitor as suffering an Extreme consequence until it can be repaired.

Marine Facilities

The ship is equipped with facilities to house, and support a unit of marines and their equipment. The Skill level determines the size and quality of marines supported. A ship has a squad of 10 marines for each Skill level. One squad will have their combat Skills at the level of the Marine Facilities Skill, the rest of the squads will be at Average. So for example a ship with Marine Facilities at Fair (+2) will have one squad with Fair (+2) combat Skills and one squad Average (+1) combat Skills..

Stunts

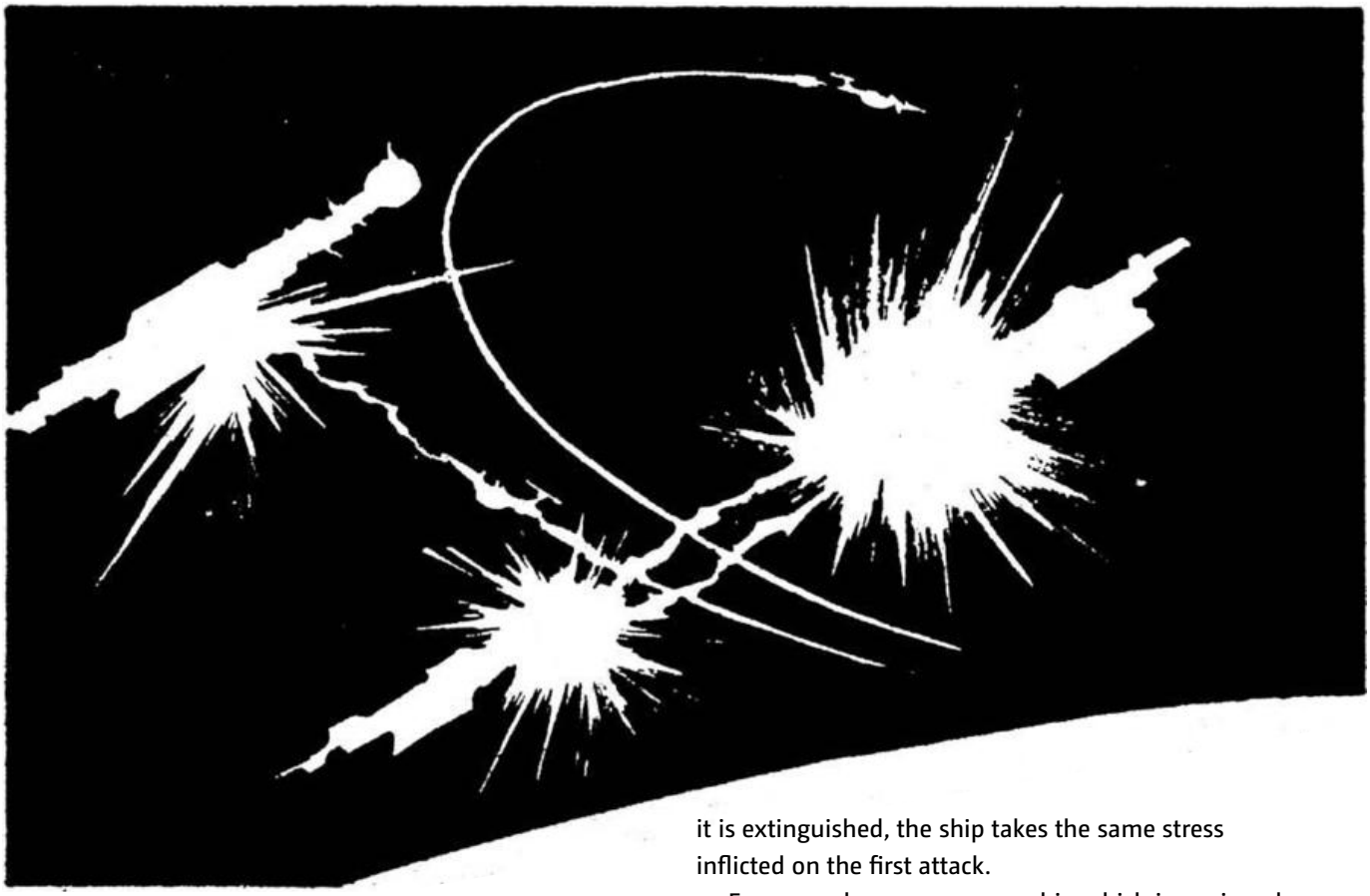
✧*Boarding Capsules*

The ship has a boarding capsule for each marine squad which has the same Manoeuvring Skill level as the marine unit's combat Skills. To be used, the ship must be in the same zone as the target ship. See Boarding Actions on page 351 for more information on boarding ships). Boarding capsules are recovered from target ships after the battle. They have one structural stress box each and can take no consequences.

✧*Assault Marines* (Restricted)*

Requires Boarding Capsules

The normal marine units are replaced with special assault marines trained to board and take enemy vessels. All marine squads combat Skills will be at the Marine Facilities Skill level



✧ ***Assault Capsules* (Restricted)***

Requires Assault Marines

These more advanced capsules replace the standard boarding capsules and can take three structural stress. They are faster and provide a +1 bonus to the capsules Manoeuvring Skill (which is the same as the squad's Skill level it is carrying).

Plasma Weapon (Restricted)*

The plasma weapon projects slow moving (compared to projectile and beam weapons) bolts of energy rather than beams. These weapons may only target capital ships of Scale Huge(5) or larger (subject to the usual targeting rules with respect to Scale).

Plasma weapons also have a nasty sting in the tail. Any target successfully hit by a plasma bolt sustains additional damage in subsequent turns unless the crew are able to deal with it. Ships with a Repair System or crew with the Starship Engineering Skill can attempt to drain the bolt of energy, extinguishing it. To do so, roll their Skill against the Skill level of the plasma weapon that fired the bolt, a successful roll extinguishes the bolt. For each turn that passes before it is extinguished, the ship takes the same stress inflicted on the first attack.

For example, suppose your ship which is equipped with Fair (+2) Reflective Amour is hit by a Superb (+5) plasma weapon. The 5 damage is reduced to 3 by the armour so the bolt inflicts 3 stress. Suppose the ship also has the Repair System Skill at Fair(+2) level. The players would roll this against the plasma weapon (+5). If the players repair roll fails to beat the Story Teller's plasma bolt roll, then the following turn, the plasma bolt inflicts another 3 stress (reduced from 5 by the armour) and the crew get another attempt at repair.

Stunts

✧***Overload***

This overcomes a target ship's energy shield or reflective armour if the Skill level is less than that of the attacking plasma weapon, but incurs the 'Overheated Plasma Weapon' Minor consequence.

✧***Split Fire (Plasma)***

A ship with multiple plasma weapons may split them between different targets instead of having to combine them all into a single attack.

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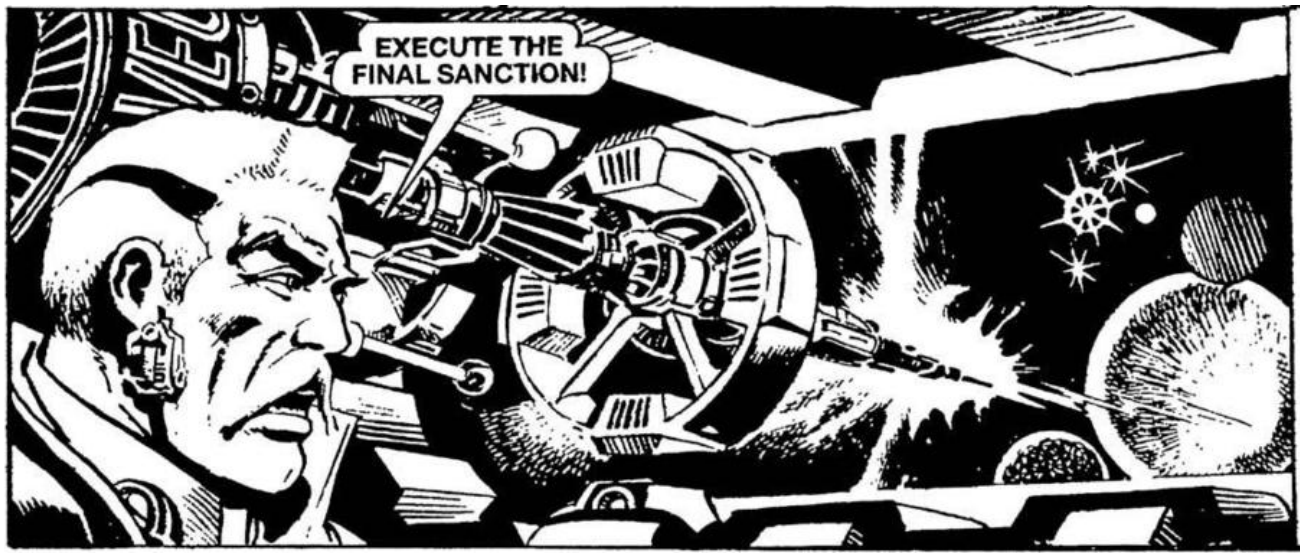


✧***System Suppression***

This alters the plasma bolt so that instead of inflicting damage, it disrupts systems and inflicts an automatic "Stun" Aspect on all of a target's Skills of the same type, e.g. all Beam Weapons or the FTL Drive. This must be repaired as if it is a Major consequence before the systems can be used again.

Projectile Weapon

This covers all forms of projectile weapon that expend ammunition including machine guns, autocannons and missile systems.

Stunts

✧***Anti-Fighter Barrage***

The projectile weapon systems hurl an explosive barrage around the ship attempting to damage incoming fighters. Attacks all Medium Scale (3) ships such as fighters and torpedo bombers up to 1 zone away at a Skill level one below that of the highest projectile weapon Skill. The ships projectile weapons cannot be fired at other targets whilst the Anti-Fighter Barrage is active. The ship can pay a Fate point and automatically destroy any incoming missiles using the barrage.

✧***Rapid Fire***

This overcomes the ablative armour bonuses of a target ship if the ablative armour Skill level is less than the attacking projectile weapon Skill level. It incurs the 'Out of Ammo' Minor consequence on the firing ship.

✧***Auto-loader***

Auto-loaders constantly feed ammunition at a high rate to projectile weapons. This negates the 'Out of Ammo' consequence at the cost of a Fate Point.

✧***Guided missiles***

The ship can fire guided ordnance that tracks the target. If the attack misses, at the start of each subsequent turn, reduce the Skill level of the attacking projectile weapon by one and re-roll the attack, repeating until the attack strength is zero or the missiles are destroyed by the target. This does not affect the ability of the projectile weapons to fire on other targets.

✧***Point Defence***

Point defence is an upgrade allowing the ship's projectile weapons to target fast moving, objects closing on the ship such torpedoes or guided missiles instead of normal targets. Make an attack versus the Skill level of the attacking weapon system. On a success a number of torpedoes or guided missiles equivalent to the Skill level of the weapon system are destroyed.

✧***Split Fire (Projectile)***

A ship with multiple projectile weapons may split them between different targets instead of having to combine all of them into a single attack)

Targeting Computer

This provides additional targeting functionality to the weapons systems. It gives a bonus to attack rolls

equal to the Skill level of the targeting computer (e.g. a Good(+3) Targeting Computer will add +3 to attack rolls). This bonus can be split between different attacks. For example a Good(+3) Targeting Computer on a ship with one each of beam, projectile and plasma weapons can add +3 to one weapon's attack, +1 to each of them or +2 to one attack and +1 to another attack.

The Targeting Computer Skill cannot be selected at a Skill level higher than Good(+3). It may only be selected once for a ship and cannot be used with the Unusual Super Weapon Skill.

Stunts

✧*Pinpoint targeting*

Pay a Fate point to allow the ship to attack a particular part of a target. If the attack succeeds, it inflicts an automatic consequence on the target based on damage to that system concerning that system. The level of the consequence depends on the stress inflicted as follows:

1-2 stress	Minor consequence
3-4 stress	Major consequence
5-6 stress	Severe consequence
7-8 stress	Extreme consequence
9+ stress	Taken Out

For example if a ship targeted an enemy's Manoeuvre Skill and achieved 1 stress it would inflict a Minor consequence such as "engine damaged, unable to reach full speed".

Torpedo Launcher (Restricted)*

These launch devastating but slow moving guided warheads designed to punch large holes in capital ships. They can only be used against targets of Scale Huge(5) or larger and ignore the normal scaling rules for targeting.

If a successful hit is made with a torpedo, the stress inflicted before armour and shield defences are counted, is doubled (remember, the stress, not the roll result). On Medium Scale (3) ships this is a one-shot weapon. An attack requires a successful target lock by making a Skill check using the Torpedo Launcher Skill against the Manoeuvre Skill of the target. If successful, then roll the actual attack in the same way. This can only be done once per turn.

Torpedoes count as guided and thus get a re-roll as per the Guided Missiles Stunt of projectile weapons if they fail to hit on the first turn, but each re-roll is made at two Skill levels less rather than one (so unless the launcher has a Skill level of Good(+3) or greater, it will not get a re-roll). Once the torpedo has been fired, the launcher must be reloaded by docking with a parent ship (such as a carrier) or landing at a base for rearming. Landing a fighter takes a turn, re-arming takes a turn, launching takes a turn.

Jamming & Point Defence vs Torpedoes

Targets with the Point Defence Stunt or the EWS Skill, may attempt to destroy (Point Defence) or jam (EWS) one incoming torpedo per Skill level. Simply attack the Skill level of the Torpedo launcher with the Skill level of the EWS or weapon with the Point Defence Stunt.

For example a ship with a Fair(+2) beam weapon that has the Point Defence Stunt would be able to target and destroy 2 incoming torpedoes by rolling the beam weapon versus the Skill level of the respective torpedo launcher). Only one Skill check is made for all incoming torpedoes that can be targeted in this way. This Skill may only be selected once and cannot be appointed to a Skill level higher than Great(+4).

Stunts

✧*Torpedoes Away!*

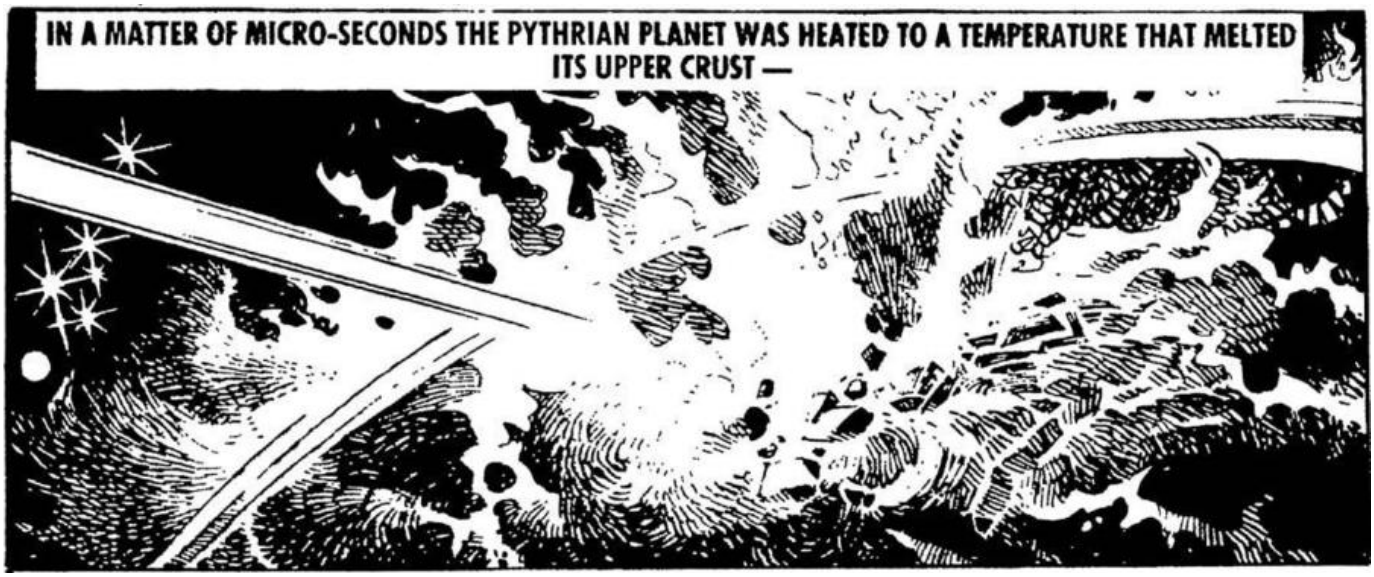
Ships of Scale Huge(5) or larger only

The ship carries multiple torpedo launchers and is able to launch a spread of torpedoes equal to the Skill level of the launcher. A target lock must still be achieved but this is made once for the whole attack.

Unusual Super Weapon (Restricted)*

Requires a ship Aspect describing the Super Weapon

This covers weapons of tremendous power mounted on very large objects that are far more destructive than beam, plasma, projection or exotic weapons. It includes special attacks made by giant space creatures (such as the Arcon, see page 564), super-weapons mounted on large space stations, spinal mounted weapons on major capitol ships, and powerful alien weapons found scattered around the Universe. The Story Teller can also use it to represent encounters with natural objects such as black holes.



For example if the character's ship flies too close to the event horizon of a black hole, you could use this to represent the black hole attempting to pull the ship in).

An Aspect should be assigned to describe the nature of the weapon such as "not another planet killing death ray", "Spinal Fusion Maw" or "Sub Atomic Deconstructor Ray". A vessel may have one Unusual Super Weapon Skill whereas a large threat (see Chapter 15) may have a second. Having two creates a weapon called the Unspeakable Super Weapon.

Weapons of this Skill make standard weapons look like water pistols and are capable of destroying whatever they hit. They are so powerful that anything of Colossal(7) Scale or less in the target Zone is automatically receives a Severe Consequence whereas Unspeakable weapons inflict an automatic Taken Out result. Any defensive bonuses given by armour or shields are negated.

To attack a target Zone the ship or crew must pay a Fate point and place an Aspect on the target Zone such as 'Powering up for Mega Death', 'Fusion Maw Opening' or 'Energy Flux Building'. On the next turn, anything still in the target Zone is destroyed by the attack if it is Colossal (7) Scale or less. Any targets in the Zone of a larger size are attacked as normal by making a Skill check for the super weapon versus the versus the Manoeuvre Skill of the target. Stationary targets of Planetary (8) Scale or greater use their Energy Shield or Armour Skill level in place of their Manoeuvre Skill level.

Stunts:

Weapons of this power really have no need for Stunts... Ok....ok!

✧*Planet Buster*

This allows the super weapon to also destroy targets of Planetary (8) Scale. However this comes at a price. All characters using this on large population centres automatically gain the 'Oh my God, what have we done' and 'Planet Killer' Aspects*.

The characters are now in danger of becoming the infamous Planet Killers hunted by security agencies across the galaxy. Planet Killer Aspects cannot be removed – killing that many people AND a living world has a very long term consequence. Players should be careful as having the Planet Killer Aspect allows the Story Teller to compel the character. For example after yet another Starport refuses permission for Red's cruiser to touch down the Story Teller says "Red, you're sick and tired of worlds refusing you landing permission, you're tempted to just blow this world away to make an example to the rest of them" The Story Teller offer's a Fate point to compel Red's Planet Killer Aspect. Of course the character can buy their way out but at some point they might be out of Fate points...

Defensive Ship Skills

Covers all systems installed aboard the ship which aid in the defence of the ship.

Ablative Armour	**Mine Dispenser**
Cloaking System	**Protected Crew Stations**
Energy Shield	**Reflective Armour**
Hardened Structure	**Shroud Generator**

Ablative Armour

Special reinforced plating applied to the hull of a Starship that absorbs damage from projectile and plasma weapons. This may only be selected once and cannot be applied at a Skill level higher than Good(+3). Ablative Armour absorbs the Skill level in stress from a successful projectile or plasma weapon hit. It can also take a number of additional consequences to reduce stress on the ship's structural stress track, see page 312.

Cloaking System (Restricted)*

This covers the ship in an electromagnetic wrapper hiding it from standard sensor systems. Whilst cloaked, the ship cannot be detected using the Ship Systems Skill, only by a ship or space station equipped with the Advanced Sensor Suite Skill. The cloaked ship may move and use passive sensors whilst cloaked but any active action such as firing a weapon system, launching a fighter or making an active sensor sweep reveals the presence of the ship which may then be detected as usual by using the Ship Systems Skill. Ships with the Advanced Sensor Suite may attempt detection as normal but modify their Skill check by subtracting the level of the cloaking system

Energy Shield

The shield surrounds the ship with an energy field that protects it against incoming attacks. The energy shield absorbs its Skill level in stress from successful beam and projectile weapons attacks plus any exotic weapons the Story Teller deems appropriate. It can also take a number of additional consequences to reduce stress on the ship's structural or ship system's stress track, see page 312. Energy shields cannot be selected at a Skill higher than Good(+3) and can only be selected once

Stunts

✧*Overload*

Pay a Fate point and the Energy Shields absorb all damage inflicted that turn by beam, projectile and plasma weapons systems. It burns out the unit in the process rendering the shields inoperable until repaired (as if they had a Extreme consequence for repair times and costs). This does not work against Unusual Super Weapon attacks.

✧*Radiation Protection*

The shields reduce the impact of harmful radiation fields such as nuclear fallout leftover from large space battles, coronal mass ejections etc by one level. The ship or crew can pay a Fate point to reduce radiation levels to 0 but burn out the Energy shields in the process. They have a 'Burnt Out' Aspect until repaired, treated as an Extreme consequence for repair times and costs.

Hardened Structure

The ship has a reinforced structure adding additional stress points to its structural stress track and reducing damage inflicted by being rammed by another ship. The Skill level determines the number of additional structural stress points the ship has and the level of damage reduction from being rammed.

For example, a ship equipped with a Fair(+2) Hardened Structure will gain two additional structural stress points and reduces ramming damage by 2. A ship cannot have a Hardened Structure Skill greater than Good(+3) and can only be selected once.

Stunts

✧ *Reinforced Prow*

The ships prow has been specially designed to ram other targets, causing additional damage with it's reinforced prow. The level of the Skill is the additional damage inflicted by the Reinforced Prow on a target with a successful ramming manoeuvre.

Mine Dispenser

This system launches a small group of mines from the ship. Used to try to dislodge or distract another ship attacking with a higher initiative or to lay an area of mines around the suspected approach of enemy ships.

In situations involving attacking ships, after launching the mines, any ship with a higher initiative that attacks this ship in the same turn, acquires a penalty to its initiative roll on the next turn equal to the Skill level of the Mine Dispenser.

If the ship lays a mine field, any ship which approaches the target must make a Manoeuvre Skill check against the Mine Dispenser Skill check. On a success it avoids the mines, on a failure it takes the difference in structural stress damage.

Stunts

✧*Mine Fusillade*

This fires mines out in a pattern around the ship which affects ALL attacking ships regardless of their initiative. This expels all mines rendering the Mine Dispenser Skill inoperable until the ship is rearmed.

✧*Repel Boarders*

This can be used to attack incoming Boarding Capsules. Simply make a Skill check versus the Boarding Capsules Manoeuvre Skill and divide any stress across the approaching capsules.

Protected Crew Stations (PCS)

All crew stations are enclosed within compartments that are fitted with automated ejection systems. In the event of the ship being destroyed, provided the level of excess damage that causes the ships destruction (or 'Taken Out' consequence) does not exceed the level of the PCS Skill, the crew are automatically ejected safely. The PCS count as escape pods of the same Skill level as the PCS. If the excess damage exceeds the level of the PCS, the crew must make an evacuation attempt as normal (see Crew Evacuation, page 359).

For example, if the ship is equipped with Good(+3) PCS, and the ship loses it's final stress track point to an attack that inflicts 4 stress damage, one point destroys the ship leaving an excess of 3 stress. Since this matches the Skill level of the PCS, the crew eject safely. If however, the damage had been 5 stress, then the excess damage (4 stress) would exceed the PCS level and the crew would have to make an evacuation attempt as normal but with the excess damage level reduced by the Skill level of the PCS (i.e. in this last case, the excess damage applied is reduced to from 4 to 4-Good(3) = 1 for determining evacuation).

This Skill may only be selected once and may absorb damage to the Structural Stress Track as consequences (see page 312).

Reflective Armour

This is special reflective plating applied to the hull of a Starship that absorbs the Skill level in stress from successful beam and plasma weapon attacks. Reflective Armour may only be selected once and cannot be applied at a Skill level higher than Good(+3). It may also absorb damage to the Structural Stress Track as consequences (see page 312).

Shroud Generator (Restricted)*

This is an exceptionally rare piece of equipment and is generally only available to special forces, government security agencies, very well connected pirate lords, or the occasional Alien Cruiser. It allows a ship to alter its appearance as viewed within the electromagnetic spectrum, appearing as anything of the same Scale as the ship itself, e.g. a space monster, a different ship, an asteroid of similar size and so on.

The Skill level of the generator determines the spectral range it can operate at. For example, a basic shroud of Average (+1) level, would only affect the visual spectrum and therefore be detectable by microwave, radio etc, whereas a Legendary Shroud would affect the entire spectrum (radio waves, microwaves, infrared light, visible light, ultraviolet light, x-rays, gamma-rays). A shroud does not mask the gravitational presence of the ship so there are ways of detecting whether a ship really is as it appears.

Only ships with an Advanced Sensor Suite and the Military Sensor Suite can try to detect the Shroud Generator. See Military Sensor Suite on page 314.

Stunts

✧*Advanced Shroud*

This allows the ship to look like anything from one size Scale below up to one Scale above.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Starship Aspects

Starship Aspects

Aspects of a ship can be tagged by a crew member (in the case of player's ships), or by an opponent if they are familiar with the ship. Character's can use their own Fate points or the ship's Fate points to pay for this.

As with character Aspects, some are positive, some negative, some can be both. Players and The Story Teller are free to come up with their own Aspects however we have included a list of example Aspects with some suggested descriptions and uses as a guide, plus a further set of examples without descriptions that we leave to your imagination. Obviously you are free to redefine these if you have better definitions for any of them.

Act Like a Limpet

The ship can attach itself, obviously or in secret to larger ships.

Tag to attach a small ship to a capital ship and "hitch a ride"

Compel to stop a hasty take off or undocking operation just when they really need to get away

Ancient Vessel

The Ship is really old and has hidden surprises the crew are unaware of. "I didn't know it could do that".

Tag to allow the ship to do something unusual or not listed in the ship Skills or to be carrying a piece of equipment just when it's needed

Compel to have something dark hiding aboard, to have an unknown weakness or a breakdown in systems.

Bat Out of Hell

Ship has heavily modified engines.

Tag to exceed the ships manoeuvring speed or help escape a pursuer

Compel to cause a collision in tight spaces

Battered and Ancient

Ship is extremely old and worn. It is a real collectors item and of interest to tourists, historians and astro-archeologists.

Tag to interest potential allies

Compel to break down at just the wrong time

BFG

That is one truly big gun...

Tag for a killing shot

Compel to scare off potential allies

Cantankerous Old Git

The Ships A.I. systems will argue back.

Tag to prevent the ship being controlled by enemies or aid an action, "good grief to I have to do everything myself"

Compel to prevent an action – the crew are arguing with the ship

Close Up And Personal

The ship is famous for its ability to let rip at close range.

Tag for a bonus in the first round of a fight if in the same zone as the target

Compel to reduce the effect of long range attacks

Cowardly Tin Can

The ship sulks when if feels it has been put at unnecessary risk by the crew.

Tag to get a bonus in escape manoeuvres, as the ship was already powering up the engines in fear

Compel to reduce certain ships systems Skills when threatened

Cross Hatched Superstructure

The ship's main hull stress points are latticed.

Tag to give a bonus to defence

Compel to make repair more expensive

Decommissioned Hulk

The ship is a decommissioned military vessel and the ships computer system retains some of its previous incarnation.

Tag for some tactical aid in sticky situations

Compel to discover something dangerous about the ship, or to have an enemy that was defeated by THAT ship give chase

Experimental Armour

The ship has experimental armour.

Tag to aid in defence

Compel to reduce the effectiveness of the armour

Experimental Beam Focus Unit

The ships beam weapons have one of those amazing new focal units but they're a touch temperamental.

Tag for a bonus in an attack

Compel to reduce the bonus of the beam weapons

Experimental Shields

The ship's shields use a new energy source that is hot off the design boards but has a habit of cutting out when needed.

Tag for a bonus in defence

Compel to reduce the shield strength in an attack

Ghostship

The ship is full of odd noises and strange happenings (the odd wrench disappears). The crew may believe ship is haunted.

Tag to unnerve boarding parties

Compel to make something vital go missing

Held Together By Gaffa Tape

The ship is falling apart.

Tag to aid in defence, perhaps the ship's rather 'flexible' structure helps absorb an impact

Compel to cause a structural consequence when the ship takes an action that could cause forceful physical stress (landing, impacts, strong changes of direction)

He's Behind You!

The ship's engine is capable of attempting a tiny controlled FTL jump behind a target. "where'd he go?.....oh....".

Tag to gain initiative

Compel to jump in to a very inconvenient situation...

The Hottest Damn Thing Flying

The ship has been customised far beyond the original design.

Tag to improve the ship's manoeuvring or to impress an ally or 'special friend'

Compel to attract unwanted attention

It's Life But Not As We Know It

The ship is actually a living entity. Perhaps the ships systems are living and cannot be installed or upgraded but can be healed over time or improved with use.

The ship is a character in itself.

Tag to assist in the natural healing process as if it had the self repair Stunt

Compel to cause the ship to malfunction when it is affected by psychological attacks

I've Got A Traaz In My Hold And I'm Not Afraid To Use It....

The crew keep a wild Traaz as a pet.

Tag to aid boarding actions

Compel to let it get free during an unfortunate moment such as the admiral's visit

Legendary History

The very history of this ship inspires those that serve in her.

Tag to improve morale of crew or cause fear/awe in opponents

Compel to cause an opponent to attack due to a previous defeat

Let's Play Possum

The ship is particularly difficult to detect when powered down. Could shut down all ships systems and play dead.

Tag to become undetectable by sensors

Compel to make the ship hard to find by rescuers in the event of a crash

Needle In A Haystack

The ship's sensor system is extremely sensitive.

Tag to detect something within range that would not normally be detectible (e.g. a ship using the "Let's play possum" Aspect).

Compel to find something it shouldn't

Notorious Record

The ship has a colourful record with law enforcement organisations.

Tag for a bonus in dealing with pirates

Compel to cause problems with local law enforcement

Once Owned By Holocaust Hogan

The ship used to belong to the legendary Captain Holocaust Hogan, hero of the Federation Star Patrol.

Tag to help with sticky situations involving the Star Patrol

Compel to send old enemies of Hogan chasing the ship, thinking him still to be aboard

One Jump From A Scrap Yard

The ship is fit for the scrap yard.

Tag to make the ship seem worthless to pirates. "That rust bucket isn't worth bothering with"

Compel to cause a breakdown at the wrong moment

One Of The Lost

Ship happens to be part of a lost fleet. There are some very nasty people around that would very much like to know where the crew found it.

Tag to provide a bonus in negotiations for allies, or to find clues to the location of the lost fleet

Compel to cause an unexpected attack from those that want it too

Pride Of The Navy

The ship is a source of pride within a fleet.

Tag to improve fleet moral or provide a leadership bonus. This could give a leadership bonus in a fleet battle

Compel to cause fury in an enemy fleet and to bring all weapons to weapons to bear on this ship: "Take her down and you take their pride!"

Pushing The Envelope

The ship is capable of exceeding its original design parameters.

Tag to temporarily increase a ship Skill by one rank

Compel to cause damage because the crew pushed it too far

Reliable Old Girl

The ship's systems are considerably more stable than most ships.

Tag to reduce ship systems damage, or repair ship systems damage in the absence of any repair abilities

Compel to reduce manoeuvrability

Research Prototype

Prototype vessel. Systems on board are experimental.

Tag for a bonus to any system

Compel to cause a system failure (it is a prototype after all!). "errrr...capt'n...the main weapons battery seems to have shut itself down....."

Scotian Engineer

The ships engineering subsystems are haunted by the ships original engineer (who happens to come from Scotland on Earth).

Tag to give ships systems self repair while the ship takes no actions or simply a bonus on a repair check

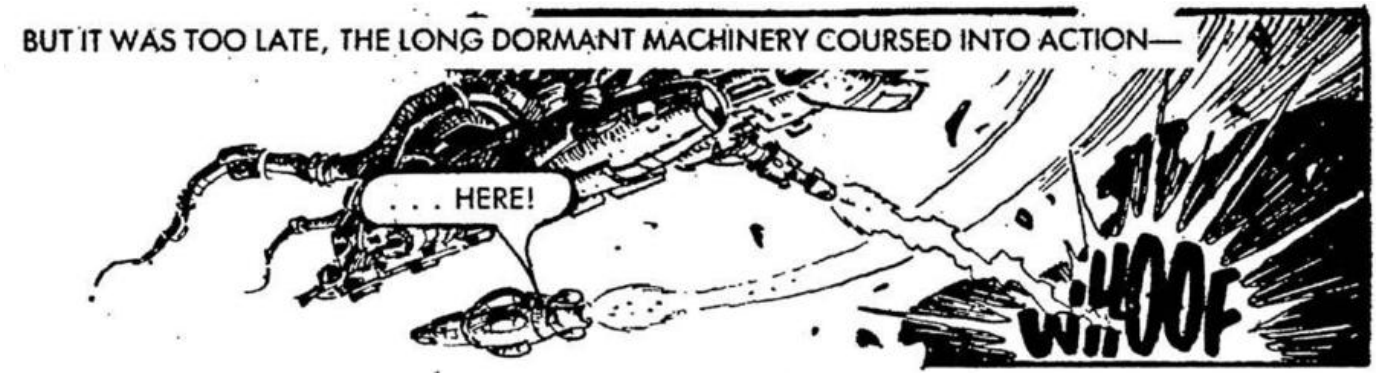
Compel to make the engines or systems do something unexpected

Seen Plenty Of Action

Ship has been through many combat engagements and is scarred and patched together.

Tag to impress

Compel to cause a system failure somewhere



She's Breaking Up...She's Breaking Up...Oh, It's Ok!

The ship's hull is like a patchwork holds itself together while flexing more than it should.

Tag to survive damage that would otherwise destroy the ship

Compel to take a consequence from the slightest damage

She's Completely Unarmed... Oh Bugger

The ship is an X-ship: resembles an ordinary freighter but is heavily armed. Weapon systems are concealed but active.

Tag to win initiative on the first round of conflict or attempt to fool an inspection into thinking ship is unarmed

Compel to lose initiative (as the weapon ports are opened)

Ship On My Shoulder

The ships computer system is an A.I. 'parrot' and can be carried with the crew when they leave the ship, perhaps in the form of a robot 'pet' or flying eye.

Tag to use a relevant ship Skill in an off-ship situation

Compel to damage the ship's AI during an off-ship fight

Speed Demon

The ship's engines have been customised to provide a boost to its manoeuvring.

Tag to give a bonus to zone movement or manoeuvre roll

Compel to cause an engine related consequence to be more serious due to the highly tuned nature of the engines or to run out of fuel

Spiky Hedgehog

The ship is designed to avoid boarding attempts through a layer of spikes on the outer hull. Makes the ship look like a hedgehog in space.

Tag to prevent a boarding attempt by assault pods

Compel to cause problems when a ship is trying to dock

Steers Like A Cow

The ship is notoriously difficult to steer.

Tag to keep the ship on course even when under heavy fire

Compel to reduce the manoeuvring Skill of the ship

Sundiver

The ship has been modified to enable it to safely skim the surface of stars.

Tag to reduce the effects of radiation on the ship and it's crew, or enable movement dangerously close to a star

Compel to cause a coolant explosion

Super Snooper

The ship's scanners are particularly effective.

Tag to temporarily increase the level the ship makes sensor scans at, or provide a bonus to a sensor scan

Compel to blind the ship if it takes a consequence (the sensors are incredibly delicate)

There's Something In The Hold....

Something lurks in the ships hold. No-one has seen it, but people feel they are being watched, hear heavy breathing.....

Tag to win initiative in ship board fights or scare a boarding party

Compel to scare the crew, start something dark and mysterious happening in the hold, or make someone or something go missing

B

Those Engines Are One Step From The Scrap Yard

The ships engines are of an antique design and require frequent refuelling or repair.

Tag to find spare parts in a junkyard or shipwreck

Compel to breakdown or run out of fuel at the wrong moment

Turn On A Credit

The ship is extremely manoeuvrable.

Tag to increase the ships manoeuvre Skill, provide a bonus to an escape roll or win initiative anytime in a fight

Compel to make pilot overconfident

Veil Of Sorrow

The ships computer system is in 'mourning' for a previous owner, and suffers bouts of depression when reminded of that owner.

Tag to discover knowledge that the previous owner might have had

Compel to increase the difficulty of an action. "I remember coming here with Brandon... waaaghhhhhh"

You Want Some Too?!

The ship's targeting systems get upset when shot at.

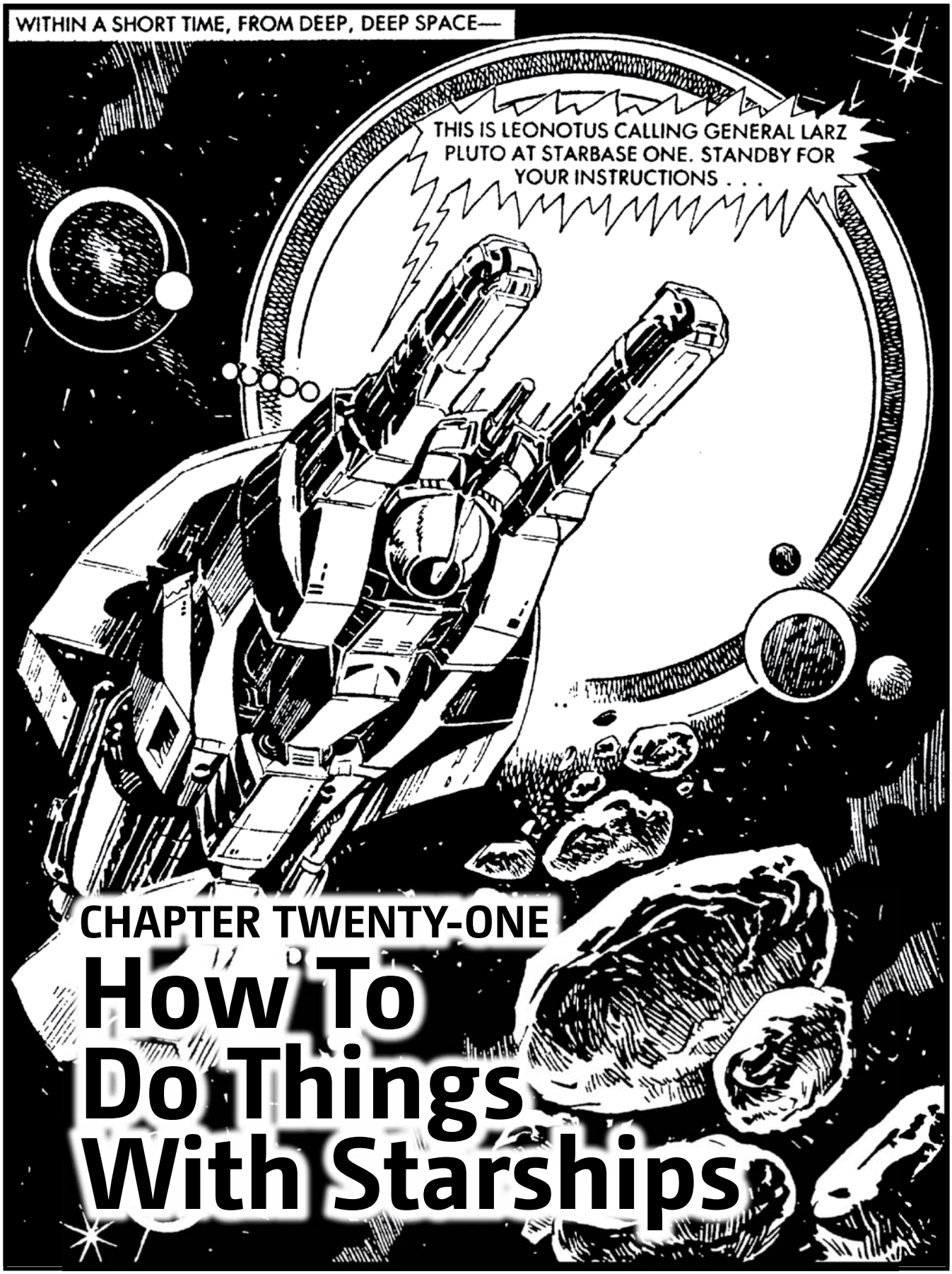
Tag to temporarily increase one of the ship's weapon Skills or targeting computer

Compel to force the ship to attack a friendly by mistake

B

Other sample Aspect names

Battered And Scratched
Battle Tested
Been To Hell And Back
Built By A Master
Clattered The Odd Asteroid Or Two
Cost Me Everything I Owned
Could Do With New Engines
Cramped Living Conditions
Cutting Edge
Danger To Other Shipping
Designed By A Genius
Dishonourable Past
Famous
Faster
Faster Than A Fly In Amber
Flagship Of The 3rd Imperial Fleet
Flying On A Prayer
FTL - You Must Be Joking
Gas Guzzling Old Lady
Get Out Faster Than We Got In
Glass Shields (Not So Good Defense)
Half Way Across The Galaxy And I Still Can't Find A Decent Pint
Hanger Queen.
Hard Nose
Harry Masters Custom Paint Job
I Had One In Green
Idiot Proof.
I'm Not Lost...I'm Just Not Sure Where I Am
Indestructible (Well, So Far. It's Durable Anyway)
Is That A Fighter In Your Cargo Hold Or Are You Just Pleased To See Me?
Kin Killer
Laughing Stock Of The Fleet
Lemon (Something Always Breaking Down)
Lit Up Like A Christmas Tree
Lost My Heart To A Starship Trooper...Wish I Could Remember Where I Left Him
More Captains Than You Can Count
My Girlfriend Married A Bad Guy Because Of This Damned Ship
My Ship Loves Rock And Roll
My Starship's A Mutant
All The Grace And Beauty Of A Garbage Scow
Now That's What I Call A Cannon...
Obsolete ("They Still Use That?")
Oh... It's That Ship
Oh... You Want Our Sister Ship, Not Us...
Outdated
Overgunned (More Firepower Than Usual)
Oversized Crew Quarters - Living In Luxury
Paranoid Android
Pirate Magnet
Powered By Mysterious Alien Artifact
Regurgitated By A Space Monster
Repaired By A Madman
She'll Reach Galactic Central On One Tank
Shields Coming Down Captain... Errr Which Shields Did You Mean Sir?
Ship Keeps Saving My Life
Space Worthy, Well Mostly Space Worthy
She's Seen Better Days, But She'll Still Run Circles Around You
Spinal Weapon Mount (For The Main Cannon)
Stalker Of The Stars
Straight Out Of A Nightmare
Sure I Left It In This Sector Somewhere....
Survived The Battle Of ...
The Best Defense Is A Good Offense
There's Always Room For A Paying Passenger
Trashed By A Rookie
Travelled From One End Of The Galaxy To The Other
Ugly As A Very Ugly Thing
Unarmed And Dangerous
Undergunned (Less Firepower Than Expected)
Underworld Connections
Used To Be Such A Fine Ship...
Which Is The Pointy End Of The Ship?
Who In God's Name Painted It Pink?
Widow Maker
Xeno-Biologist Onboard


WITHIN A SHORT TIME, FROM DEEP, DEEP SPACE—
THIS IS LEONOTUS CALLING GENERAL LARZ PLUTO AT STARBASE ONE. STANDBY FOR YOUR INSTRUCTIONS . . .

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

How To Do Things With Starships

B

How to do things with Starships

Needless to say, there will be times when characters hurtling around the galaxy run into another Starship they cannot run away from or which decides to attack.

Once the engagement has actually started, Starship combat is broken down into a handful of phases just like character conflict. These are uncomplicated and can be simplified by the Story Teller if felt appropriate. You can use the simple rules below or even make it much more abstract. For example, your ship encounters another which is much smaller and very clearly inferior but chooses to fight you rather than hand over his cargo. Instead of spending the time on doing the actual combat, the Story Teller could just decide you win the fight but suffer a Minor consequence to your Ablative Armour because the sneaky git had a hidden Beam Weapon no-one noticed (and might then give you or your ship a "Fooled by a Sneaky Git with a Hidden Beamer" Aspect for your trouble).

Quick Ship Conflicts

Okay, you don't want to keep track of your ship's 'character' you just want to resolve ship conflict with a few rolls? Simple, follow this method:

The players decide which ship based Skill they will use for the conflict; Gunnery to outfight, Maneuver to out maneuver or escape, Ship Systems to outwit or use system attacks.

The players then tag any relevant Aspects they want to use.

Make a roll with this Skill versus the target ship's equivalent Skill (if defined). If it's a ship belonging to an organisation which has a Ship based Skill such as Arms (Pirate Attack Ships) Fair (+2) then one Skill will be rated at this level, such as a Beam Weapon Fair (+2), and all other Skills default to the next level down.

The winner assigns stress to physical or system stress depending on the type of attack or may use the shifts to escape or succeed at a maneuver they have planned.

That's it!

Remember whilst you can create the ships like characters it might not serve the story to make the characters go through each Starship conflict in detail. Sometimes it's fun but other times you just want to get to the next key scene in the story. Try to gauge whether the players enjoy Starship conflict, if they don't then these two methods are a good way of simplifying things.

Ship Crews

Unlike character interaction, ships may have a number of crew aboard which allows a ship to take more than one action each turn without penalties. Larger ships will obviously have crews consisting or more than just a single pilot. The player's ship(s) will invariably have or end up with a crew consisting of a mix of PCs and Extras. In addition, important enemy ships or key opponent ships could also be given crew members by the Story Teller.

Pilots of Medium scale (3) Starships get a free action – which means they can manoeuvre and attack without incurring a penalty. It's the pilot of a fighter diving towards a battlestation all guns blazing or a lonely scout evading the alien cruiser whilst desperately trying to program her jump drive.

For all other ship scales a crew member is required for each action or the Skill check suffers a -1 penalty through being controlled by the computer instead of trained crew.

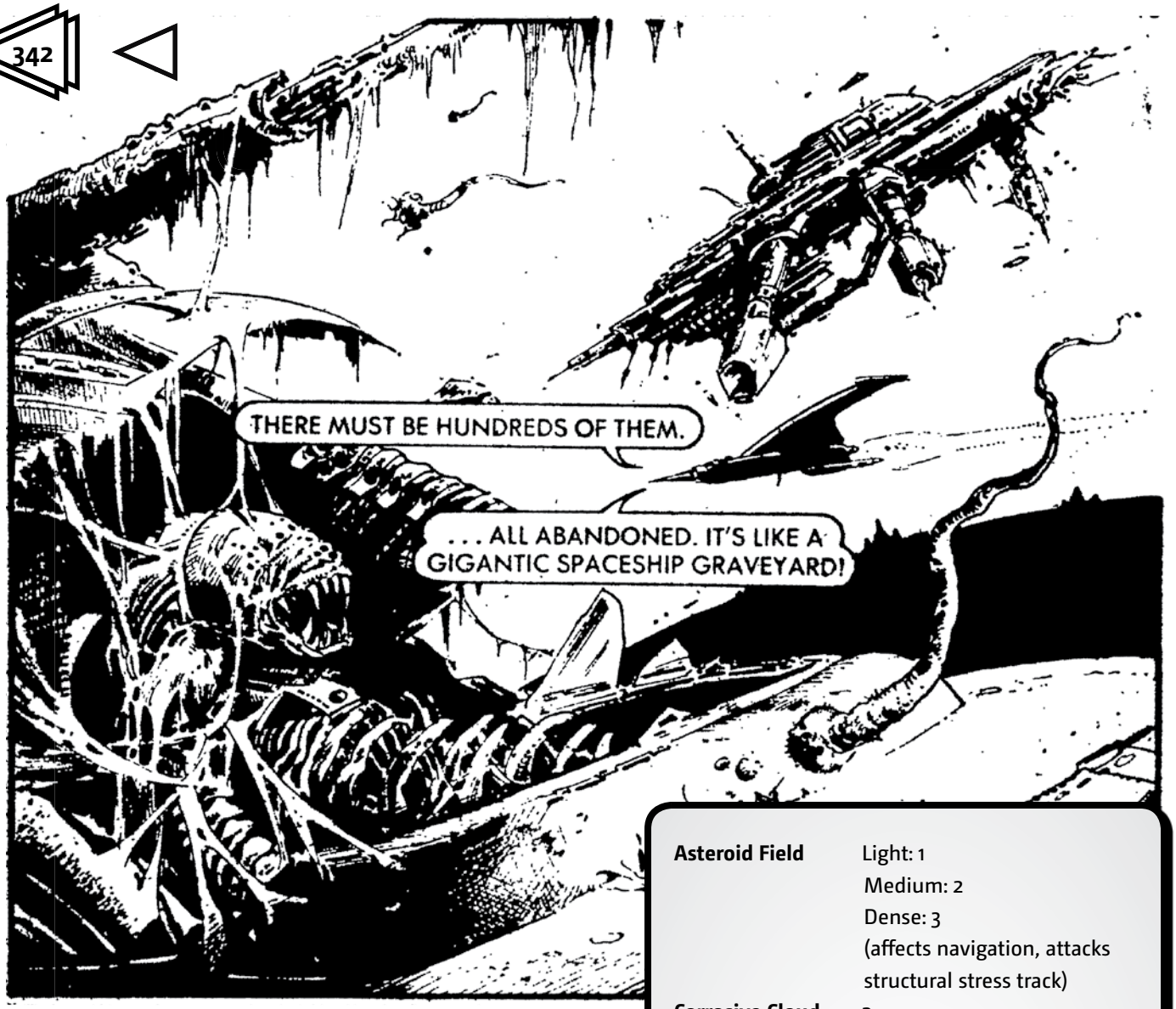
When making any ship based Skill check, if a member of the crew has an appropriate Starship Skill at a higher level than the ship, they may use this Skill instead of the ship's Skill. This is not true for attributes of systems such as the range or facility size of a ship based Skill, so a pilot with a Great(+4) Starship Systems Skill flying a ship with a Fair(+2) *Ship Systems* Skill will not extend the range of his ships sensors beyond their normal range, they remain at Fair(+2). Similarly, neither would he improve the Med-bay of his ship which would also remain at Fair(+2), his higher Skill level can only be used to make Skill checks, not affect the physical attributes of the ship.

A crew member may also use their own Fate Point or a Fate point belonging to the ship to tag a Ship's Aspect.

See Starship Skills (starting on page 312) for specific Skills that crew members can use aboard ship.

Zones

Starship conflicts are represented in a similar fashion to character engagements using zones. The complexity and number of which will depend on the scale and location of the engagement and are determined by the Story Teller. As with character engagements, zones



for Starship combat should represent distinct areas or regions. Some very large regions (such as large tracts of interstellar space) could be broken down into smaller zones if a more detailed level of strategy is desired during the combat.

As with character zones, space zones can also have barrier values between them or contain barrier values – such as an asteroid field, which makes it harder to move from one zone to another or planetary ice rings filling a whole orbital zone. Some example barriers are shown here with their suggested barrier values but feel free to decide what values will suit your scene.

If Zones contain the barrier elements above they also provide cover for a ship in the zone or obstruct the whole zone. The barrier value is deducted from the Detection attempt of any ship trying to detect a target inside the zone. During combat the barrier value is deducted from attack Skill checks for both ships attacking from inside and those outside the zone targeting a ship inside.

Asteroid Field	Light: 1 Medium: 2 Dense: 3 (affects navigation, attacks structural stress track)
Corrosive Cloud	2 (damages structural stress track)
Dense Star-field	2 (affects navigation)
Dust Cloud	1 (affects sensors)
Ion Storm	3 (damages ship systems stress track)
Minefield	3 (attacks structural stress track)
Plasma Cloud	1 (affects sensors & ship systems track)
Plasma Storm	3 (attacks structural and ship systems stress tracks)
Planetary Ice Rings	1 (affects navigation)
Starship Wreckage or **Debris Field**	3 (affects navigation, sensors)

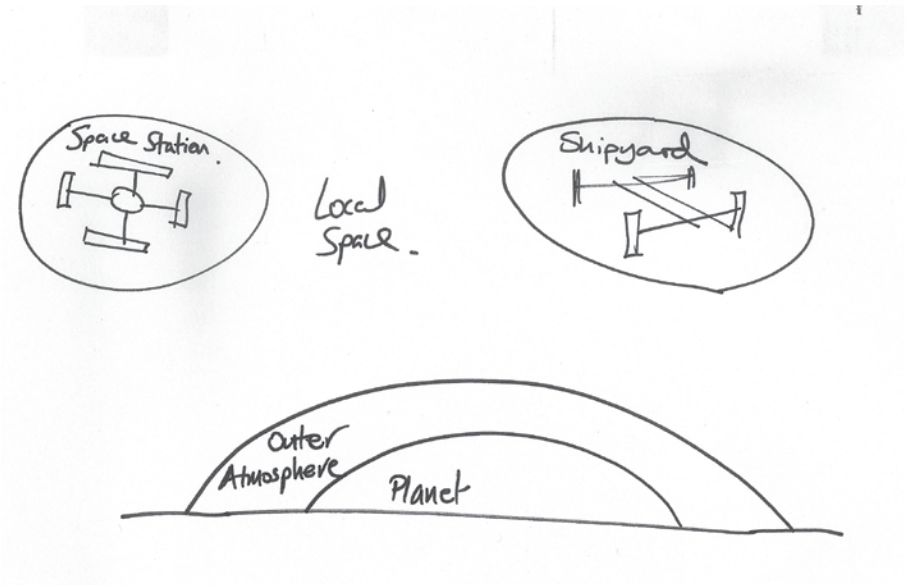
Example of Zones

Here, we present a handful of examples for Starship encounter zoning, from small scale scenes up to scenes involving intergalactic distances. We group Starship scenes into a handful of scales:

Orbital	planetary orbit
Planetary	planetary system (including moons)
Solar System	an entire solar system
Interstellar	spans groups of solar systems
Intergalactic	spans more than one galaxy

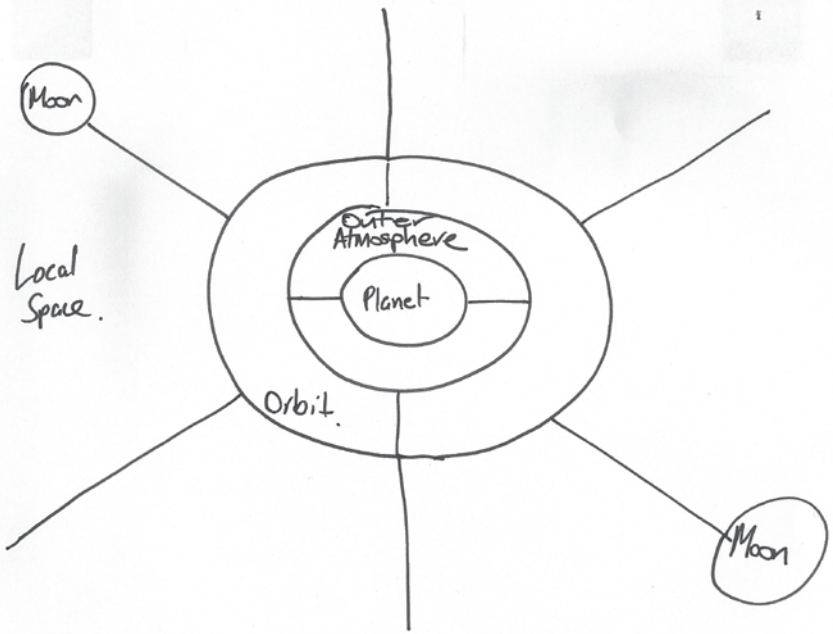
Orbital Encounter

An encounter in orbit could consist of 3 basic zones - the planet, it's outer atmosphere (which could only be entered by a Starship with the *Atmospheric Entry* Stunt), and local space which could be broken up in to zones containing orbital features relevant to the scene such as a shipyard, space station, giant space bat etc.



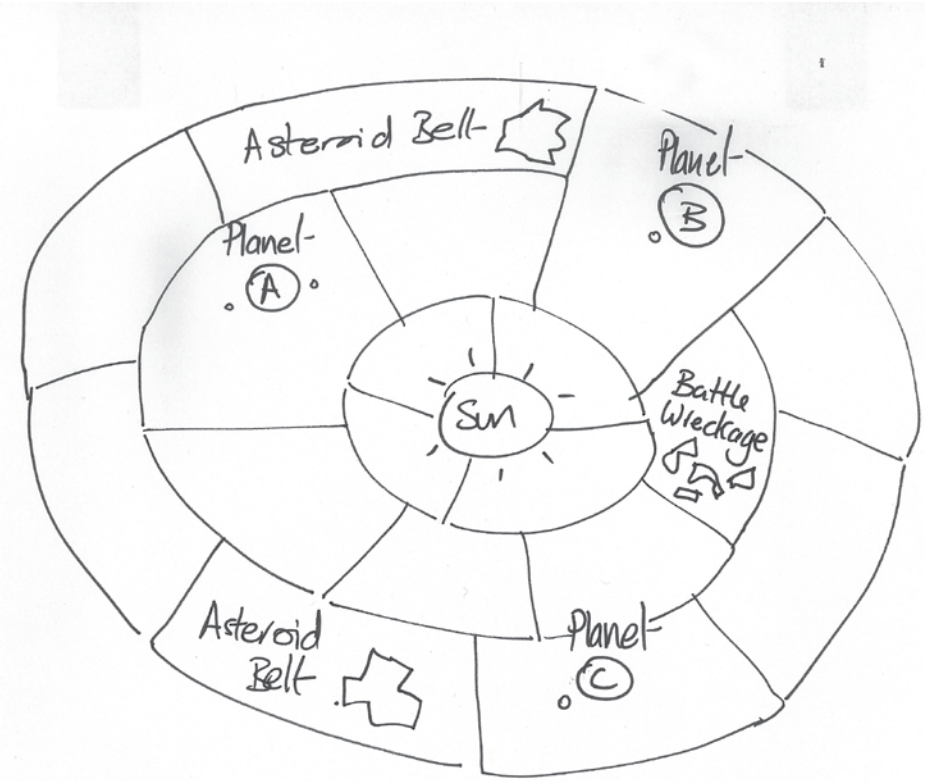
Planetary Encounter

Scaling up, your scene might be set in the local space around a planet. Here, we have zones representing the planet, its outer atmosphere, and local space broken up in to various zones including two featuring the planet's two moons. As with the orbital example, the Story Teller could add additional features to local space such as space stations, military bases etc, or even a planetary ring system if the planet has one.



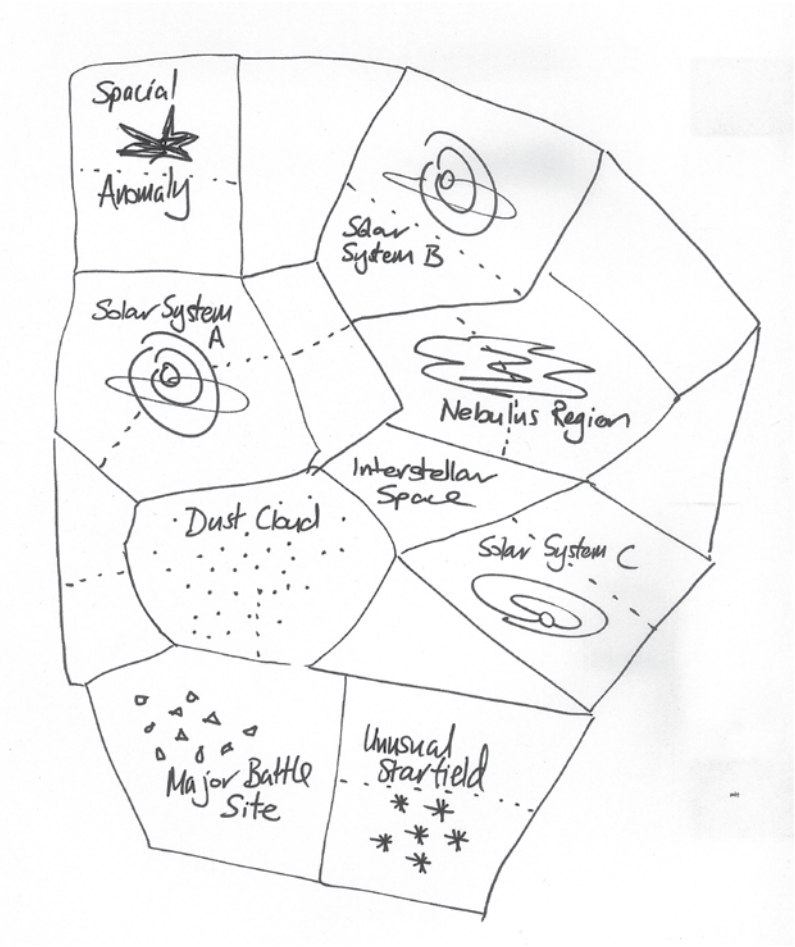
Solar System

On a still larger scale, you might want to use a solar system for your scene. This example is of a solar system featuring five planets (some with moons) and a pair of asteroid fields. The star counts as a zone, its outer corona another zone, each planet is a zone as are their respective outer atmospheres and each moon (the Story Teller may want to simplify this and condense each planet along with it's outer atmosphere and moons into single zones). Local space around the solar system is then broken in to a number of zones. Asteroid fields, dust clouds and anything else the Story Teller decided to throw in would also fill whole zones or act as barrier values between zones.



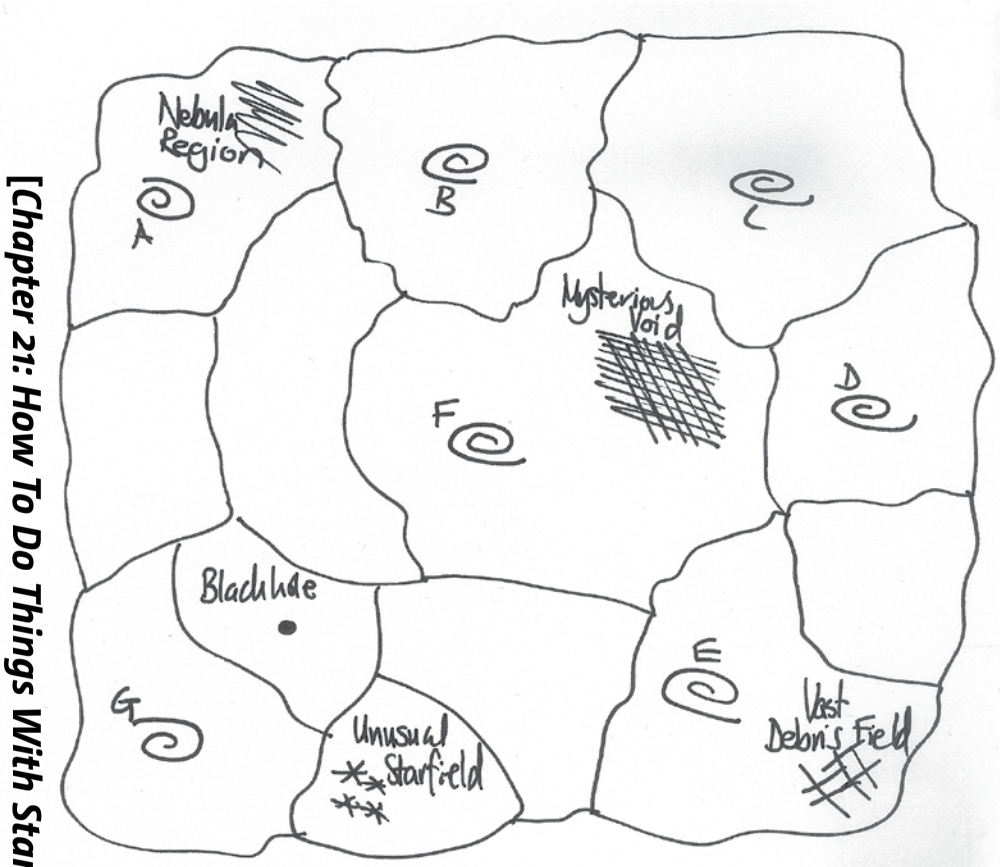
Interstellar

This example shows a region of space containing three solar systems and a number of other features. It looks like a particularly busy area of space as we have added features to demonstrate the sort of things you might want to include. Each solar system would count as a zone, as would the nebulous region, the dust cloud, the starfield, the anomaly and so on. For simplicity, the space between these features is broken down into smaller regions (the dashed lines in the example). This example could be enlarged to represent a sector of a galaxy, or even the entire galaxy itself, each solar system representing a group of stars and their respective planets).



Intergalactic

For the largest likely scale, we consider intergalactic space. If you find yourself involved in an intergalactic war, you can scale up and use something like this example. Again, various features can be inserted as zones or barrier values between zones, and intergalactic space can be split up into as many zones as you want to handle (for example, the dashed lines above). We've only added seven galaxies above but obviously you are free to have as many as your scale demands. Using this scale, you can command extreme numbers of fleets and set about conquering the Universe!

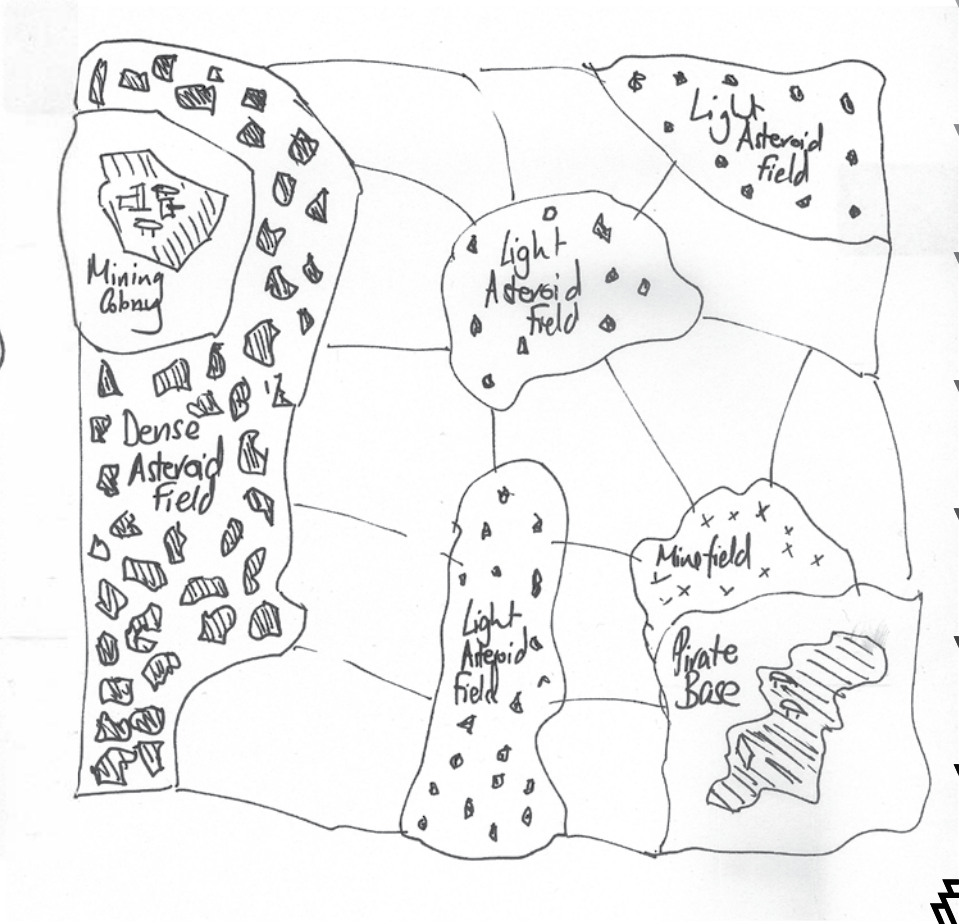


Other Examples

These examples are small scale but show the sorts of thing you can do with specific features found in space.

Asteroid Field

Here we have a simple asteroid field containing zones of different densities (see *Zone Barrier Values* above for details). We have thrown in a mining colony and pirate base with attached minefield as features. The actual scale of something like this is up to the Story Teller.

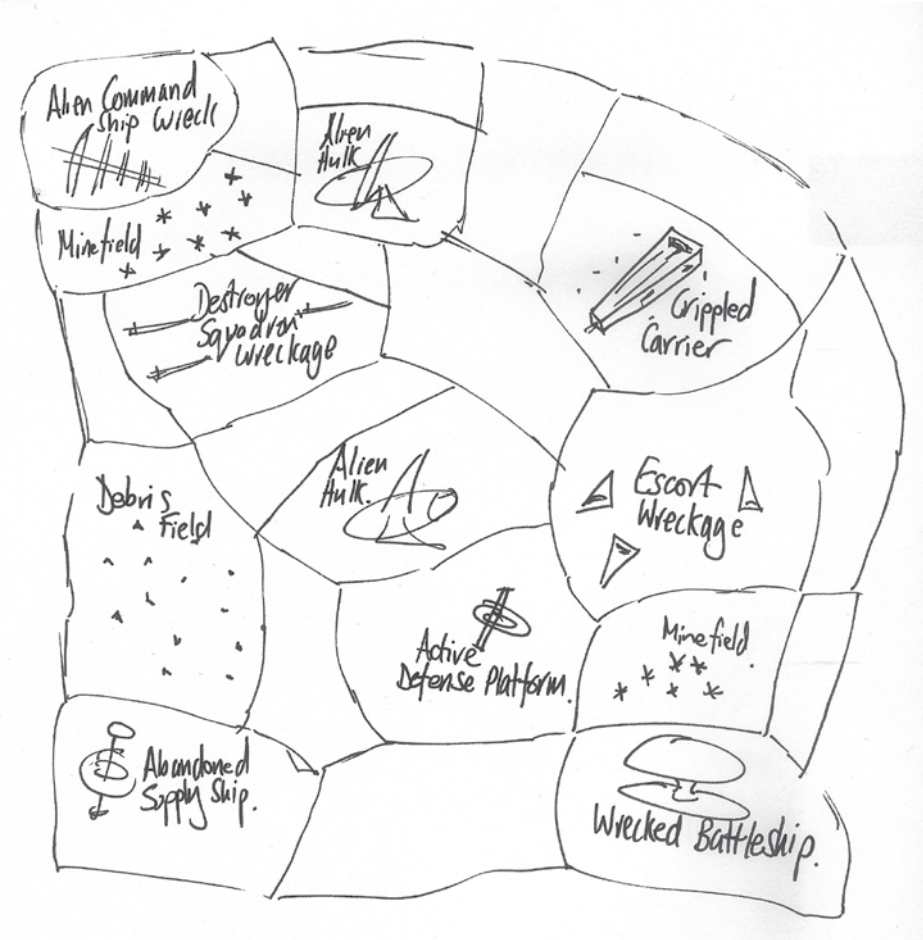


Dangerous Nebulous Region

Here we have a region of space containing various "dangerous" clouds. Since each cloud is a separate feature, they have their own zones. The intervening space is broken up into several zones. Each zone may have various effects (possibly unknown) on ships passing through them.

Debris Field / Battle Site

In this final example, we have the left-overs of a major battle between a Star Patrol fleet and a smaller (more advanced) Alien battle group. Large ships such as the fleet carrier, battleships and alien capitol ships have their own zones, wreckage from smaller ship actions (i.e. the destroyer squadrons) count as a single zone each, then any other features such as debris fields, the supply ship etc are a zone each. Again, the actual size of this scene is up to the Story Teller.



Weapon Ranges

Here are some guidelines to ranges for Starship weapons and electronic warfare attacks. Distances in Zones include the zone that the attacking ship is in.

Starship weapon ranges depend on the scale of the ship;

Ship Scale	Weapon Range (zones)*
Medium (3)	1
Large (4)	2
Huge (5) +	4

If you have ships on a map of Interstellar scale or greater, ships and fleets can only fire at or interact with ships / fleets in the same zone.

At first glance, this may seem unfair comparing the ranges between ships of Medium(3) & Enormous(6) Scale, but bear in mind Enormous(6) Scale ships cannot normally target ships of Medium(3) Scale.

Remember that only ships that have been successfully detected can be attacked. If a ship is not able to detect any ships (i.e. all the enemy ships are cloaked or out of sensor range), the *Ranged Attack Phase* is skipped.

Tagging the Space Environment

Just as in character combat, spaceship combat should be about getting the right moves on the opponents, using the environment and quick thinking to defeat them. Let the enemy fighters chase you in to the wall of an asteroid, use the ancient derelicts as cover for your cruiser, lure the enemy fleet in to the star creature's lair, everything is possible in Starblazer so where possible, use the location to your advantage.

Conflicts and encounters in space could be in the wild blackness of space, but they could also be close to interesting places and in unusual conditions with Aspects such as a Fast Moving Asteroid Field, Deadly Nebula Field, Icy Gas Giant Rings, The grave yard of the Star Serpents, Wreckage of the Palinian Naval Battle, Sargasso Space Fields, Shipyards of Davette.

All of these could have further useful Aspects like; Too bright for visual contact, fast moving masses, gotta be manoeuvrable to turn in these tight spaces, watch the sides, deadly asteroids, you'll get stuck here, the radiation dose is high, plenty of cover, deadly wreckage, indignant lifeforms and much more.

Check out the Story Teller Tools chapter for tables to generate interesting space locations.

Conflict Sequence

A space based conflict consists of a series of turns or 'exchanges' each of which is broken down into four phases. The sequence is repeated until all the ships of one side are defeated, surrender or escape. Not all phases will occur every turn.

1. **Frame The Scene**
2. **Detection**
3. **Establish Initiative**
4. **Begin Exchange**
   - » **Special Actions** (EWS / ECM, grappling, boarding, attempt to detect any still undetected targets)
   - » **Manoeuvres & Ramming Attempts**
   - » **Ranged Attack**
   - » **Evasion & Escape**
   - » **Establish Initiative** for next exchange with ships still in detection range

All ships must complete each phase before any ship can move on to the next phase.

1. Framing the scene

At the beginning a Story Teller should describe the scene; the zones, any barrier values on borders between zones or in zones themselves, any special features such as strange nebulae, asteroid fields or wreckage that the characters will know about and add any Aspects that are relevant (see Tagging The Space Environment above). Maps showing the different zones such as the examples above are useful for this if you want to make it a more tactical encounter.

What if I don't want to use maps?

Instead of using zones you could get any ships involved to make a Manoeuvre Skill check (or Starship Piloting Skill if a character is available) to give a sense of the ships attempting to get a better position on enemies. If a ship decides to attack targets that scored lower than them they gain a +2 to physical attacks or manoeuvre actions. If they chose to attack targets that scored higher they gain a -2 penalty to physical attacks or manoeuvre actions. All ships are assumed to be in range in this case.

2. Detection

Before you can have any interaction between ships or fleets they have to know each other is there. Sometimes ships will want to lie in wait, or sneak up on an enemy to get a shot in before they are noticed.

For one ship to detect another, the target must be within sensor range (the number of zones equal to the Skill level of the Ship Systems Skill or Advanced Sensor Suite Skill (whichever is higher). If at any time a ship moves in to the sensor range of another ship then any ships that can detect a target must check for Detection.

Detection is a simple contest where both ships make a roll using their respective Ship Systems or Advanced Sensor Suite Skill whichever is higher. If the ship making the detection attempt wins, it successfully detects the other ship. If an attacking ship is undetected it automatically wins initiative.

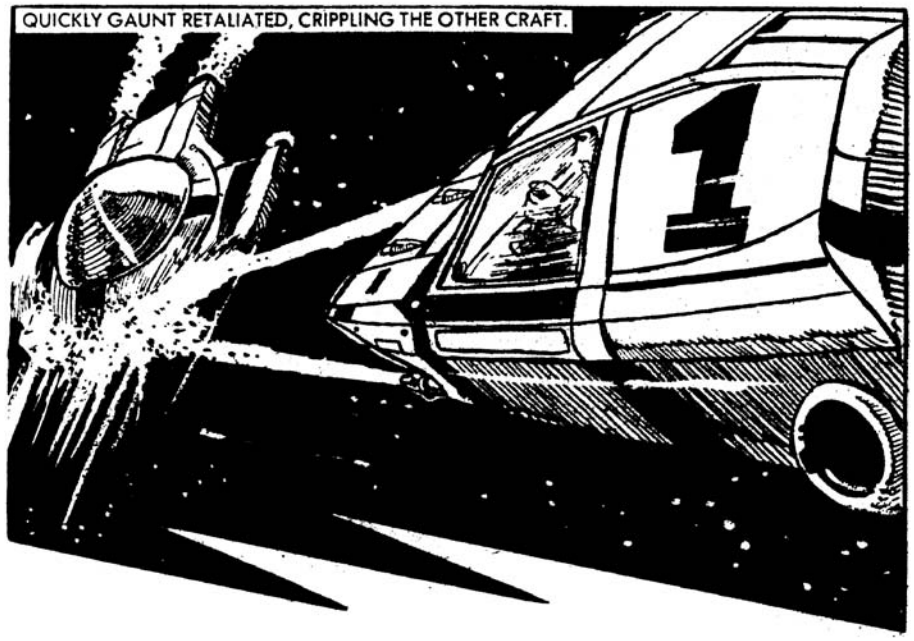
There are a few potential modifiers to the Skill check as follows;

- If a target ship is 'on alert' and expecting trouble, then the crew gain +2 to their Skill check to detect the attacker but their must be a valid reason for a heightened sense of alert, and it can only be sustained for so long before boredom sets in.
- If the attacking ship is lying in wait for the target, deduct 2 from the target's Skill check
- If a barrier is in between the ships or then the barrier value should be deducted from both sides Skill check. For example an asteroid field, ship wreckage, ice rings, nebulae etc.
- If the target ship is in a zone containing a barrier value then the value is deducted from the detecting ships Skill check.
- Ships can only detect a ship using a Cloaking device if they have the Advanced Sensor Suite or if the cloaked ship fires a weapon or launches a fighter.
- Ships can only detect a ship using a Shroud generator with the Advanced Sensor Suite Skill and Military Sensor Suite Stunt
- Ships with the Military Sensor Suite Stunt gain +2 to Skill checks
- Sensor probes add two to Sensor range.

Additional modifiers may be included by the Story Teller for any space terrain (e.g. asteroids), scenario / story influences etc.

Any ship that is undetected and takes any offensive action (i.e. opens fire, uses an EWS attack, launches a fighter) against another is automatically detected the instant the action takes place (e.g. as soon as the first beam weapons hits the target) even if the attacker is out of the defender's sensor range. It is assumed that the Sensors strength is focused in a set range however targets shooting weapons at a ship immediately get pinpointed by the ship's sensor system.

In addition an undetected ship may attack out of sequence. For example if a target moves in to sensor range of a ship lying in wait the ship can take attack with all of its weapons or make an EWS attack (but not both). The ship is immediately detected and the defender has the option of stopping or continuing to move. It has already passed the special action phase so it will only have the option of returning fire with weapons or attempting to escape this exchange.



Encounters with multiple ships and detection

There will likely be situations where one or more ships remain undetected whilst other ships are taking actions. An undetected ship automatically wins initiative in the turn that it chooses to become detected through taking an offensive action such as launching a fighter, firing a weapon or using an EWS attack. However other ships may react to it in initiative sequence in that phase. For example if an detected ship attacks in the attack phase it does so before all other ships. However any surviving targets may attack back in initiative order afterwards.

If a ship is detected by another ship making a detection attempt during the exchange (in the special action phase) the newly detected ship must make an initiative check to determine when it takes actions during the exchange.

3. Establish Initiative

Any ships still undetected by the others automatically win initiative if they choose to take an action at any point during the exchange.

The initial order of ship actions is determined at the beginning of the conflict, with ships acting from highest to lowest Skill level (ties resolved with the roll of a dice).

Any ships involved that are hidden (cloaking device, shroud generator, lurking in asteroids etc) will automatically win initiative whilst they are hidden. A roll should either be made for them at this point, recorded and used when they do reveal themselves or when they are detected. If multiple ships are hidden, use this roll to determine initiative order within the hidden ships.

For the initiative Skill check a ship can choose from the following Skills depending on the intended action and use the highest appropriate Skill;

- **Ship Systems Skill** – if it plans to use an EWS or ranged weapon attacks
- **Advanced Sensor Suite Skill** – Ranged weapon or EWS attacks (note the Military Sensor Suite bonus of +4 is also added for purposes of initiative)
- **Electronic Warfare Suite Skill** - EWS attacks only
- **Maneuver Skill** – maneuvers or ranged weapon attacks
- **Pilot Starship Piloting Skill** – maneuvers or ranged weapon attacks
- **Leadership Skill** – fleets only, all actions
- **Arms: Ships** – fleets and organisations only, all actions

This is referred to as the order of initiative (i.e., "who takes the initiative to go when" and tells you which ships get to go first in each phase of the turn.

If all this seems a bit too much just follow the guidance in Chapter 10 on simple initiative – basically, each round, move the initiative one space around the table starting from the person on the left of the Story Teller.

If any hidden ships are involved, this may change as they reveal themselves or are detected in the exchange.

4. Begin The Exchange

Phase A - Special Actions & Manoeuvres

Each ship (in initiative order) may now perform a single special action if desired. Special actions are basically anything that is not a direct weapon attack. This includes:

- Mount an **EWS attack** on a target (see EWS attacks on page 351)
- Attempt a **grappling** action (requires the *Grappling System* Skill and both ships must be in the same zone)
- Launch a **Boarding Capsule** (requires the *Marine Facilities* Skill)
- Start a **boarding action** (requires the *Marine Facilities* Skill and the *Launch a Boarding Capsule* action to have been performed in a previous turn)
- Launch **mines** (requires the *Mine Dispenser* Skill)
- Make a **detailed scan** of a detected target (make a sensor roll at Skill level vs the higher of the targets *EWS* or *Ship Systems* Skills level to "see inside" the target and obtain a basic view of the sort of cargo it carries, whether the ship is armed, crew compliment and so on. The higher the attempt wins by, the more detailed the information obtained)
- Stand by to **repel boarders** (if the crew know a boarding action is incoming and will reach them next turn, they may prepare a defensive position for the event giving them a +2 bonus to all character or Extra's based defensive actions once the boarders arrive. For example getting defensive marines or crew in to position, setting up cover, etc. Performing this action incurs a penalty of one Skill level on all other actions and events the crew and ship perform until the boarding actually occurs or they abandon the defensive preparations losing the bonus)
- Attempt **Damage Control** to repair some of the Stress of Consequences taken during the previous turn (requires Repair System Skill with Auto-Repair Stunt or crew member with Starship Repair Skill who is not occupied with

piloting or firing ship weapons). See In-flight Repair under Repairing Damage on page 359.

- Attempt to **detect any ship** still undetected that is within the ship's Sensor range
- **Hold your action** (in case an undetected ship appears or a target comes into range). This allows the ship to take an action out of initiative sequence.
- **Full Defense**. A ship can opt to protect itself for an exchange.For example it is focusing weapons on incoming missiles, taking evasive maneuvers, etc. It gains a +2 on all reactions and defenses for that exchange but -4 to any physcial attacks (this does not affect EWS attacks).
- **Block Action**. When the ship's action is preventative – trying to keep something from happening, rather than taking direct action to make something happen – the ship is performing a block action. The crew, captain or pilot declares what he's trying to prevent and what Skill he's using to do it. Players may declare a block against any sort of space based action or actions and may theoretically use any ship based Skill, but unless the block is simple and clear, the Story Teller may assess penalties based upon how hard it would be, or how much of a stretch it would be. Players should never be able to "cover all bases" with a single block.

Grappling Attempts

Grappling attempts are a contest against the targets Manoeuvre Skill. If successful, all ranged attacks by the grappling ship against the grappled ship gain a +3 bonus. The grappled ship can attempt to escape during it's next movement by rolling its Manoeuvre Skill versus the Grappling System Skill.

Blocking

A blocking ship could declare that it is protecting another ship by putting itself between the ship and it's attacker. The crew or ship makes this declaration this exchange, and rolls it's Maneuver or Starship Piloting Skill to block; the result (dice roll plus Skill level) is the **block strength**. When, later that exchange, any enemy tries to attack the protected ship, the protected ship gets the benefit of both the blocker's defense as well as its own, whichever is better. The attacking ship rolls his attack as normal. The defender rolls his maneuver Skill defense as normal. If that defense roll is higher than the block strength, he uses the defense result; otherwise he uses the block strength. The attacker then generates shifts as normal.

For other types of blocks, the blocking ship declares the block on his turn, and rolls the Skill he's using to block, subject to any penalties imposed by the Story Teller. The result is the block strength. Later that exchange, every time another ship tries to perform the blocked action, (such as tractoring a target ship) it enters into a contest with the blocker. The ship trying to get past the block rolls the Skill it's using for the action (not a Skill specifically appropriate to the block), and compares it to the block strength. If the attacker gets at least one shift, he successfully overcomes the block.

Trying to get past a block always takes an action, though the Story Teller may grant similar latitude in deciding what Skill is being used to get past it.

EWS Attacks

These represent non-physical attacks made using the Electronic Warfare Suite and require the EWS Skill. They attack the target ship's Ship Systems Stress Track and cannot inflict damage on the Structural Stress Track. An EWS attack can be carried out on any target that has been detected, is within range and has a Ship Systems Stress Track.

The attacking ship rolls its EWS Skill against the higher of the *EWS* or Ship Systems Skill of the target. If the attacker wins, as with physical attacks, the damage inflicted on the targets Ship Systems Stress Track is the difference between the attack and defence rolls. If the target also has an EWS Skill, it reduces the damage by the Skill level of the target ship's EWS system. Doing so counts as the targets special action for the turn though so if it has already performed a special action (such as made its own EWS attack), it cannot reduce the stress in this way. As usual the target ship may take Consequences to absorb Ship System stress damage.

Boarding Actions

Attempts may be made to capture other ships by boarding it. This can be done by either disabling the target (by destroying the engines, inflicting enough

damage on its Systems Stress Track etc.) or using a successful Grappling System attack to bring the ships together and connecting or docking to an airlock, entering a flight bay and so on. To start the boarding a target, the ship must be in the same Zone as the target and have successfully started a boarding action in the previous exchange. You can now play out a character scale action or keep it really simple. Here's how: each marine squad can now attack either the Ship's System Stress or its Structural Stress (up to the marine squad) using its own Skill level. The boarded ship defends as usual as if this was a ranged or EWS attack. This represents the ship's crew and defence systems fighting back whilst the boarders destroy systems and kill crew aboard the ship.

Boarding Capsules

These are specialised short range shuttles designed to carry a boarding party (usually in the form of a squad of marines or a gang of pirate band) to a target and latch onto it's hull. They do not require the target to be disabled in order to make a boarding action but both ships must be in the same zone.

They can either target an existing airlock and allow the boarders to attempt opening the airlock, or simply clamp themselves onto the hull of the target and make an entrance by burning through the hull (the Story Teller might decide to test an engineering Skill against the ship's hull or simply allow the capsule to cut through the hull).

It requires two combat turns to start a boarding action using Boarding Capsules. The first to launch the capsule, and the second to make the docking/clamping attempt by rolling the capsule pilots Manoeuvring Skill against that of the target. If the capsule pilot wins, the capsule locks onto the airlock or hull and the boarding action begins. If failed, the target evades the attempt and will have to make another attempt on the next combat turn. In addition, the target may attack the capsule in its next attack phase.

Treat a Boarding Capsule as a Medium (3) ship with a single point on its Structural Stress Track but no Ship Systems Stress Track (i.e. it is immune to EWS attacks). Its Manoeuvre Skill is equal to that of whoever is flying it or defaults to Average (+1). Assault Capsules have three structural stress.

Once a boarding action has started, the scene switches to person to person combat which might include special scene Aspects such as "The gravity has been cut!".

Alternatively if the boarding ship is sending squads of marines or pirates, run the scene between squads of boarders and crew as minions (page 226).

Phase B - Manoeuvring & Ramming

Manoeuvring

In initiative order, ships may choose to move. A ship makes a roll and adds either its Manoeuvring Skill level or the pilots Starship Piloting Skill if higher. It can then move that number of zones. Remember some zones will cost more to move into due to barrier values on the border or in the zone itself. A ship can always move at least one zone as long as its Manoeuvring drive is undamaged (i.e. without consequences).

Any ship that has declared an attempt to disengage in the previous exchange which is being contested by opposing ships may pay a Fate Point to move an additional zone at this point.

If an undetected ship moves in to sensor range then any ships that can detect each other must make roll for Detection. If a ship withheld it's action in the Special Action's Phase then it could now react to the new target.

Ramming

Though a combat move dating back to the ancient days of sea warfare on Earth, ramming still has its uses in Starship combat.

In order to ram, the target ship must be in the same zone as the ramming ship. If the ramming ship has the *Grappling System* Skill, it can use this to augment the ram attack by making a grappling attempt during the Special Action Phase (this cannot be done retrospectively, it must be made in the Special Action Phase).

Once the ram attempt has been declared, both ships make an additional Manoeuvre roll modified as normal (same as with the Manoeuvre Phase), however, if a successful grappling attempt was made by the ramming ship in the *Special Action Phase*, then add the Skill level of its Grappling System as a bonus to the ramming roll. If the target wins the roll, the ram attempt fails.

If the ramming ship wins the roll, it successfully rams and inflicts structural stress damage amounting to the shifts generated plus its scale plus the level of

THE DOOR COLLAPSED AND A HORDE OF PIRATES SWEPT IN.
SURRENDER OR DIE!
BUT RIK COULDN'T DO A THING TO HOLD THEM OFF.

its Hardened Structure Skill (if it has the Reinforced Prow Stunt). Rammed ships deduct the level of their Hardened Structure Skill (if present) and their Armour bonus from damage.

The ramming ship takes structural stress damage amounting to the scale of the rammed ship less any Armour and Hardened Structure Skill bonus of the ramming ship.

As an example, let us say our rusty Cruiser (Huge (5) Scale, default 5 Structural stress) has the Reinforced Prow Stunt attached to a Fair (+2) Hardened Structure (increasing Structural stress to 7) and decides to attempt to ram a Medium Freighter (Large (4) Scale, with only 2 Structural stress left). They both make the manoeuvre roll and the cruiser successfully beats the Small Freighter by +1 and rams it.

The Cruiser inflicts 1+5+2 (Shifts + Scale + Hardened Structure Skill) for 8 stress damage and takes 4 stress from the size of the Medium (4) Scale Freighter, minus 2 stress from the Fair (+2) Hardened structure, for a total of only 2 stress. The Freighter is going to have to take a Minor and a Severe or an Extreme consequence to absorb the stress. It's not looking too good!

Phase C - Ranged Attack

At the start of the Ranged Attack Phase, all ships involved make a single defensive manoeuvre roll using either their ships Manoeuvre Skill or the pilots Starship Piloting Skill. Appropriate Stunts and modifiers can be applied, and of course any Fate Point expenditure (particularly if you are under heavy attack and make a really bad defence roll!). The defence manoeuvre roll represents the ships evasion techniques for the turn of combat and counts for all incoming attacks (it is not re-rolled for each incoming attack). Expending a Fate Point to add to the defensive manoeuvre can only be done immediately after the defence roll is made, not once other ships have made their defence rolls or the attacks have started.

Once all defensive manoeuvre rolls have been made, ships start making their attacks in initiative order. Ships can have several weapon systems and (if stated in the weapon description) are able to have multiple instances of each of them. When attacking, all weapon Skills of the same type are combined into a single attack (unless the ship has the Split Fire Stunt for a weapon type). The attack is rolled using the highest Skill level for the weapon type (the Skill bonuses of the extra weapon systems are only added as additional Stress damage on a successful hit).

If a ship is firing on a target which is unaware (for example in an ambush situation) it gains a +3 bonus to each and every weapon (exotic, beam, projectile or unusual) attack roll in this exchange only.

For example...

Suppose the players are flying an old rust bucket of a cruiser equipped with a Good(+3) Beam Weapon, Fair(+2) Projectile Weapon, Average(+1) Beam Weapon and Average(+1) Projectile Weapon. In this case, the cruiser would be able to mount two attacks, one for the beam weapons, one for the projectile weapons. The Beam attack would be made at the Good(+3) level, the Projectile at Fair(+2). If the ship had the Split Fire Stunt for the beam weapons, it would be able to split the beam weapons and hit one target with the Good(+3) Beam Weapon and another with the Average(+1) Beam Weapon. If the ship hit its target with the Good (+3) Beam Weapon it would incur an additional +1 physical stress for the additional Average (+1) Beam Weapon Skill.

For each ship in turn then:

- Declare any attacks being made, nominating the target for each weapon system before making any attack rolls (all weapon systems on a ship fire simultaneously so you cannot select, fire, select fire and so on). The attacker can nominate an actual ship's Skill which would be the target of the attack if they wish. Any Consequence taken as a result of the attack must affect that system unless the ship can take a Consequence on an Energy Shield or Armour.
- For each weapon system being used, make an attack roll using the highest Skill level for that weapon type (as described above). If the attack roll beats the defensive manoeuvre roll made by the target, the attack hits and inflicts stress damage. The final damage inflicted is calculated from the difference between the attack roll plus damage bonuses from multiple weapons systems and the defensive

manoeuvre roll. See Taking Damage on this page for full details on the calculation.

Medium(3) Scale ships such as fighters receive a free action and do not receive a -1 penalty to their attacks if they have made a special action during the Special Action Phase just like characters taking a Supplemental Action.

See the full ship combat example on page 363 later in this chapter.

Taking Damage from Ranged & Ram Attacks

For each attack that hits, calculate the final damage inflicted by taking the difference between the attack and defence roll totals. If the attack was made using multiple weapons, then the extra weapons add their Skill level in damage to the total. This is the base damage level that hits the ship.

For example, going back to our aforementioned rust bucket of a cruiser, we had two beam weapons, one at Good(+3), one at Average(+1), and two projectile weapons, one at Fair(+2), the other at Average(+1). If the cruiser (no *Split Fire* Stunt) had hit a target with its beam attack and beat the defensive roll made by 4, the damage from the hit would be 4 stress. However, this is modified by adding the level of the Average(+1) beam that was part of the attack so the total becomes (4+1=5) stress. If the cruiser happened to have another

Good (+3) Beam Weapon that was also included, the damage would be the initial 4 stress plus the level of the Average(+1) beam plus the level of the additional Good(+3) beam yielding (4+1+3=8) stress in damage.

Depending on the type of weapon that hit, the target may be able to reduce the base damage if it has armour or energy shields. The reduction to the stress damage inflicted is summarised in the following table:

This yields the final base damage total. The ship may then further absorb stress damage by taking consequences. Some Skills (such as Ablative Armour or Energy Shields) allow you to take consequences on themselves to reduce damage to a particular stress track (even if a system was nominated). Once such a Skill has absorbed its consequence maximum, it is rendered unusable and can no longer be used to absorb base damage (see *Ships Skills and Stunts* on page 312 for how to use this). For example a ship with Average (+1) Armour which has taken a Minor Consequence no longer provides the -1 modifier to stress damage.

Damage can also be reduced by members of the crew who can take consequences themselves (see What About the Players? on page 359).

Finally, whatever is left is the actual damage is marked off the stress track. This is stress that cannot be absorbed by consequences or the owner has decided not to absorb. The stress is marked off the appropriate stress track (structural for physical attacks using ranged weapons and system stress for EWS attacks).

This sounds like a lot of things to put in the way of incoming damage, it will extend the survivability of the ship but bear in mind once a Skill is rendered unusable by consequences, it has to be repaired before it can be used again. Also consider that consequences (see Repairing Damage, below) do not heal over time but need to be repaired in-flight or at a repair yard. Crews still need to keep the ship flying long enough to reach a repair yard (and afford to have it repaired!).

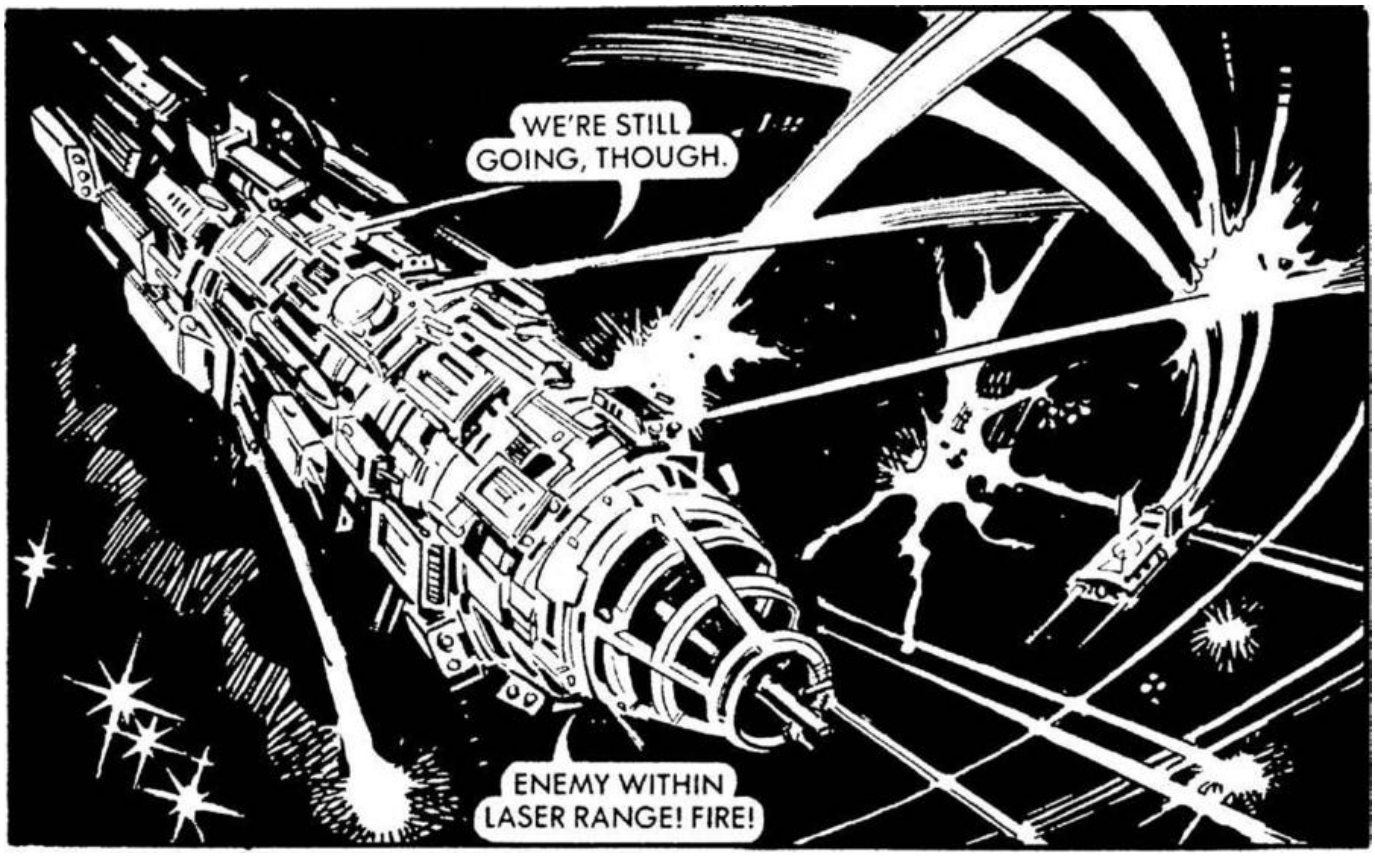
See Ship Destruction on page 358 for what to do when the ship starts to fall apart. See Repair &

Base stress damage reduction by weapon type and defence system

Defence / Weapon	Ablative Armour			Reflective Armour			Energy Shield		
	Avg	Fair	Good	Avg	Fair	Good	Avg	Fair	Good
Beam Weapon	0	0	0	-1	-2	-3	-1	-2	-3
EWS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Projectile Weapon	-1	-2	-3	0	0	0	-1	-2	-3
Plasma Weapon	-1	-2	-3	-1	-2	-3	-1	-2	-3
Exotic Weapon	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Ramming	-1	-2	-3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Torpedo Launcher	-1	-2	-3	0	0	0	-1	-2	-3
Unusual / Unspeakable Weapon	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*

* Unusual super weapons inflict an automatic Severe consequence on all targets in the zone. Unspeakable weapons inflict an automatic Taken Out consequence on all targets in the zone. The Story Teller may allow a quickly modified Energy shield to reduce the type of consequence by one or more levels (for example Taken Out reduced to Extreme or Severe).

Exotic weapons may be of a nature that bypasses all types of defences however this is very powerful. It is recommended that the Story Teller considers the defences that are suitable against an exotic weapon before creating one or allowing the players to create one. For example they may be absorbed by reflective armour or energy shields (ray or energy type weapons) or ablative (projectile type weapons).



Improvement on page 359 for how to deal get the ship up and running again.

Phase D - Evasion & Escape

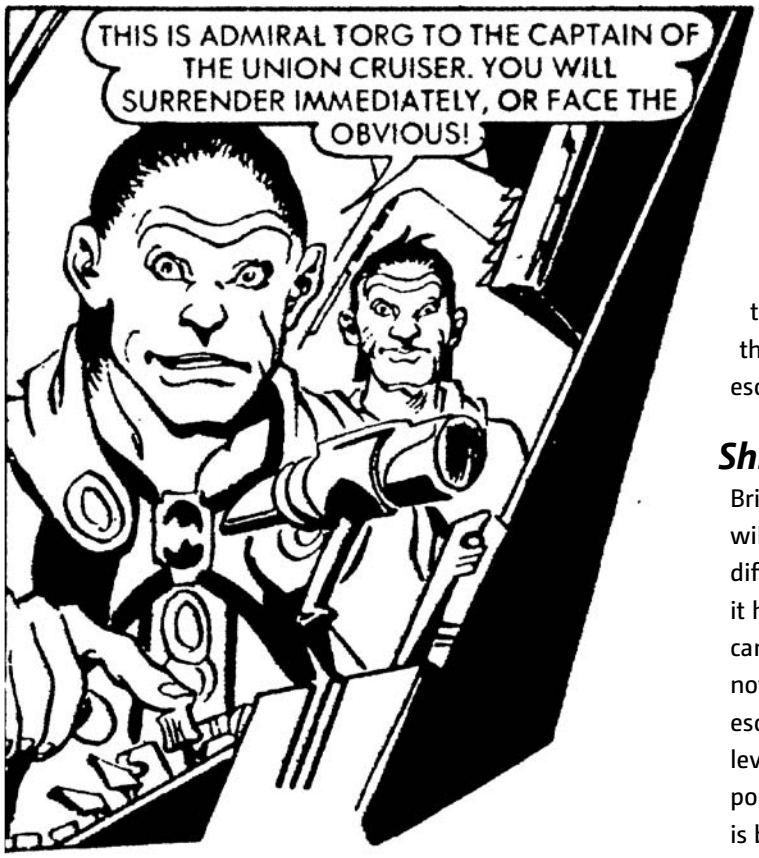
Any ship may declare its intention to "make a run for it" and disengage from combat. If the opposing ships do not intend to pursue (i.e. the Story Teller lets you off, the opposing ships are in no condition to pursue, are busy finishing off your best mates ship etc), then escape is automatic and the combat ends. If the opposing ships object to the escape attempt, they will pursue forcing the escaping ship to meet certain conditions in order to escape. The conditions differ slightly depending on a ship's available (functioning) drive systems. The type of drive being used (i.e. SL or FTL) for the escape attempt must be specified as part of the escape attempt declaration.

Once a ship has declared an attempt to disengage in the next turn, it only participates in the Manoeuvre & Special Action phases until the attempt is abandoned or succeeds (or the ship is destroyed!). Opposing ships may still target and attack the fleeing ship as normal. If the disengagement attempt has not succeeded by this phase (6) in the next turn, the ship can either abandon the attempt and turn and fight (in which case the next turn is a normal combat turn), or continue the escape attempt by declaring another Disengage & Escape during the next turn.

Disengaging via FTL

In order to escape using its FTL drive, a ship or fleet must be able to put at least 2 zones distance between itself and pursuing ships (which is the safe distance for engaging a FTL drive) The escaping ship will automatically make its escape jump at the start of the Disengage & Escape phase where both these conditions have been achieved thus it could happen the turn after the escape declaration - if the ship achieves this gap on its next Manoeuvre phase, it will escape at the start of the corresponding Disengage & Escape phase providing the opposing ships were not able to close the gap again that turn (thus it is possible to declare an escape attempt, then actually jump during the next turn). If the escaping ship has the Blind Jump Stunt, it makes it's escape jump the instance the required distance is achieved (i.e. it would jump during it's Manoeuvre phase before the opposition attacks rather than waiting till the next Disengage & Escape phase).

If there are not enough zones in the scene to accommodate these conditions, you could count leaving the scene (i.e. moving to a zone outside the



scene) as meeting the requirements (or you could add additional zones outside the original scene as the engagement expands).

Disengaging via SL

This is a little trickier. Since the ship is unable to escape local space, it must evade the opposition by getting beyond their detection range. The escaping ship must achieve a zonal distance between itself and any opposition exceeding the maximum detection range of all opponents. Any modifiers (due to tagged Aspects, Stunts etc) that affect this detection range will count towards the required range. For example, if the players decide to "leg it" from a scrap with a Frigate with a Good (+3) Ship Systems Skill (i.e. with a detection range of 3 zones) they must continue to manoeuvre until the Frigate is at least four zones away at which point the ship is assumed to have escaped.

The ship can also attempt to run for a zone that offers cover such as an asteroid field or ion storm that will help foil sensors and hide the ship (in the case of ships with a Stunt that allows them to enter planetary atmospheres, they could reach and land on a planet where ships without such a Stunt could not follow them). Ships reaching cover (such as an asteroid field) will then have to successfully conceal themselves (a manoeuvre or Starship Pilot Skill check to get in to suitable cover). Treat the quality of the cover as both the difficulty to find and hide behind in time and also the penalty for the pursuing ship's Sensor Skill check the next exchange to find the ship. If successful and the pursuing ship cannot detect the hiding ship in the next turn it has lost contact and the defender escapes.

Ship Destruction

Bringing either of a ship's stress tracks down to zero will render the ship 'taken out' or destroyed, but in different ways. A stress track is deemed at zero when it has no more stress boxes available and the ship cannot take any more consequences. If the crew have not already abandoned ship, they have a chance to escape depending on their survival equipment and the level of excess damage inflicted when the final stress point is taken off. Once this point is reached, the ship is beyond repair (even by a Legendary Repair System).

Ship Systems Stress Track

When this is reduced to zero, it effectively means the ship has been rendered unusable - all its systems have been destroyed despite the hull being intact. There is no life support or power whatsoever. The only equipment that will work is equipment that uses an independent power source (such as survival suites).

Once this stress track is reduced, any surviving crew that are not wearing a Space Survival Suite must make an immediate evacuation check (see Crew Evacuation below). Those wearing one, may take a little time to gather immediate items and equipment (e.g. the ships memory core, navigation chips etc) before attempting their evacuation (the level of the suite will determine how long they have).

Structural Stress Track

The point at which this track is reduced to zero represents the complete destruction of the ship. It literally comes apart, either by explosion, vaporisation, breaking into pieces, depressurisation fracture etc. The ship is reduced to pieces of scrap that can be collected as salvage. As soon as this stress track is reduced to zero, any surviving crew must make an immediate evacuation check (see Crew Evacuation below)

regardless of whether they are wearing a Space Survival Suite or not..

Crew Evacuation

In the event of a ship's destruction, the ships crew may make an attempt to evacuate the ship and live to fight another day. Evacuation checks must be done on an individual basis - each crew member has their own chance of survival. The check is a test to see whether they make it to and use a survival system such as an escape pod in time. All ships are assumed to have some form of escape system (needless to say if the ship has taken a consequence affecting the escape system, the Story Teller will have some interesting work ahead deciding how the damage will affect their chances – perhaps the navigation of the pod is damaged and they end up on that dangerous looking world below...).

The Protected Crew Stations Skill can allow automatic evacuation (see Protected Crew Stations under General Ship *Skills*) depending on the level of damage incurred when the fatal strike hit the ship.

To make an evacuation roll, determine the level of difficulty by taking the ships Scale such as Medium (3) Scale as an idea of the size of the ship and the difficulty in navigating the internal corridors), then add the amount of excess stress damage from the attack that caused the Taken Out result. This total is the difficulty level and remains the same for all crew members.

For example the Enormous (6) Scale B

attleship Solaris is breaking up in orbit over Mars. It took a beam weapon hit which caused a further 2 stress than could be absorbed by it's structural stress track or consequences. The difficulty for the crew to escape the ship is therefore 6+2 or Legendary (+8).

Each surviving crew member in turn then makes a roll against this difficulty using the ship's Ship Systems Skill plus the Skill level of their highest single Starship Skill as a bonus.

If the total evacuation roll for a crew member exceeds the difficulty roll, they successfully get out in time. If the roll is equal to or less than the difficulty, the crew member dies and "goes down with the ship". Roll up the next character.....

Obviously for large ships you don't need to roll for every crew member. Each player character should be asked to roll and depending on their actions the Story Teller could give them bonuses. Just check for key characters – especially Extra's and maybe roll once for the general crew or each group of crew – perhaps the marines in the barracks, the fighter pilots, the bridge crew, etc. Just remember not to overdo it.

What About the Players?

If they pay a Fate point, Player Characters may elect to take a consequence instead of marking off stress points on one of their ships stress tracks. This represents some sort of damage inflicted on the ship that affected a character such as a control panel exploding in the face of the science officer, a fire in engineering that seriously injures a character there, and so on. The stress absorption levels are the same as for ships Skills (see table on page 312) but the consequence affects the character instead.

Remember players can also use their character's relevant Starship Skills to make a ship based Skill checks if it is higher than the relevant ship Skill.

Repair & Improvement

Obviously, players will want to try and repair damage they incur during their forays in the galaxy. Both stress track damage and consequences can be repaired but unlike characters, consequences to Starships do not heal over time - they always require repair. As with characters a ship's structural and system stress tracks do clear at the end of a scene as long as she the ship is out of combat and able to organise damage parties to put out fires and place emergency patches on hull breaches etc...

If a system or Skill has taken a consequence and the owner has marked it as untaggable by being destroyed then this can only be repaired at a Starport in an orbital shipyard, landing field or spacestation hangar.

In-flight Repairs

Some damage can be repaired onboard without the need for a repair facility (including during combat). Attempts at in-flight repair requires either of:

- A character with the Engineering (-2 to Skill bonus) or Starship Engineering Skill
- The ship to have the Repair System Skill and the Auto-Repair Stunt

If the ship has both a character with the Starship Engineering Skill and the Repair System Skill, the Repair System adds its Skill level as a bonus to the repair attempt.

B

As another example...

Coming back to our now even rustier cruiser, suppose it took a heavy series of hits and has Good (+3) Ablative Armour that has taken a Minor and a Major consequences (i.e. the armour has been rendered ineffective as it has reached its maximum number of consequences).

In addition, the ship has also suffered an Extreme consequence (reactor explosion) and a Minor consequence (beam weapons offline).

The players decide to make an attempt at repairing the Ablative Armour (they could try and repair the Beam Weapon as well but would only be able to repair the Minor consequences, they can do nothing about the Extreme consequence - that will need a visit to a repair facility).

The Story Teller looks at the difficulty for the repair attempt. Since the armour has a Minor and a Major consequence, the players try to repair the Major consequence first. This is a difficulty of Fantastic +7.

Suppose the players Engineer character, Spanners McAdin, has a Good(+3) Starship Engineer Skill and the ship has an Average(+1) Repair System Skill. The Engineer player then makes an engineering roll of +3. He adds his repair Skill (+3) and the ships repair Skill (+1) to make a total of +7. Since this equals the difficulty, the repair attempt has succeeded and takes a few days.

Now suppose another ship had been present which had a Great(+4) Repair System Skill and the Repair Drones Stunt, and agreed to assist the players in the repair attempt.

This would add a further +4 to the engineering roll thus: +3 (basic roll), +3 (engineers Ship Repair Skill), +1 (the ships Repair System Skill), +4 (other ships Repair Drones) for a total of 11 which generates a further 4 shifts over and above those needed to repair the Major Consequence.

This is enough to repair the single Minor consequence however all the repair work is completed once the largest consequence is repaired (in 'a few days').

To make an in-flight repair attempt (only one system or Skill repair attempt can be made per consequence. Nominate a single system or Skill that has taken one or more consequences and find the difficulty of the repair.

Consequence	Time to Repair	Difficulty
Minor	An afternoon	Great
Major	A few days	Fantastic
Severe	A few weeks	Legendary
Extreme	Not possible	Not possible

An engineering roll is made against the difficulty using the engineers repair Skill or, if using the Auto-Repair Stunt, just the Repair System Skill level. If you are using a character with the Starship Engineer Skill aided by the Repair System Skill, add the level of the Repair System Skill to the roll as well. If another friendly ship has the Repair Drones Stunt and agrees to use it to aid the repair (providing your ship is stationary and the other ship is in Zone 1), add the level of the other ships Repair System Skill as well.

The *not possible* result in this table reflects the fact that regardless of how high the engineering roll total is, **Extreme consequences cannot be repaired in-flight.** Extreme consequences can only be repaired at a full repair facility - they represent a system having been virtually destroyed and cannot be patched up or field repaired. It is also likely that a ship with a Extreme consequence is unable to move under its own power and will require towing to a safe port.

If the total of the engineering total exceeds the total difficulty, then the Shifts can be used to repair a further consequence (if the total Shifts equals the difficulty of the lesser consequence), or to reduce the number of time periods that the repair takes (see Time Increments table on page 237). If additional consequences are repaired using spare shifts the repair work is completed once the largest repair job is completed.

For example if Brandon Carter with various bonuses achieved a total of +8 to repair a ship with a Minor and a Major consequence, it would leave +1 which he then uses to decrease the Time to Repair by one level to A Day from A few days. +1 wasn't enough to do anything about the Minor consequence on the ship so he opted for the quicker repair time.

If a ship is able to land on a planet or moon with a breathable atmosphere it gains a +1 to the repair Skill check as the crew are able to freely move around the outside of the ship.

As a quick guide time periods are reduced as follows: a few weeks becomes a week, a week becomes a few days, a few days become a day, a day becomes an afternoon, an afternoon becomes and a few hours which becomes an hour

Repair Facilities

The most effective means of repairing a ship is to use a repair facility such as an orbital shipyard, repair bay aboard a much larger ship or planet based repair yard. These facilities can be found all over the galaxy but charge for the services (not to mention the cost of the replacement parts required). They are also the only way to repair an Extreme consequence.

Once the characters have found a repair facility that is willing to deal with them, is able to repair their damage (i.e. capable of obtaining the spares required) and that crew can afford to hire they can have the ship repaired. The time scale involved is relative to the level of damage but creative players could try to influence this by establishing a rapport with the repair crew, offering bonuses to the repair crew and then how hard the spare parts are to come by could also affect the outcome.

Characters could pre-empt these costs in certain circumstances—they might negotiate the cost of repairs and/or spares into contracts they sign for corporations, governments etc or retain salvage rights on certain missions which would yield valuable spare parts they need to keep going, particularly the rarer parts (or simply turn pirate and steal them!).

The following table on page 362 shows the time to repair consequences in a repair facility and the cost of repairing the damage in the form of a Resource Skill test. The repair facility's repair system Skill must be of the same level as the resource roll difficulty of the consequence or greater to be capable of repairing it.

Level of Consequence	Time to Repair	Resource Skill difficulty to repair at facility
Minor	A few hours	Good
Major	A few days	Superb
Severe	A few weeks	Fantastic
Extreme	A few months	Legendary

The characters must pick a consequence to repair and make a Resource roll with any bonuses they have to get the repairs done. Any shifts generated can be used to decrease the time to repair (see time increments table on page 237) or to repair a lesser consequence for the same price, as long as the extra shifts generated equal the resource roll required for the additional consequence.

For example if Brandon Carter got a total of +7 with a Resource Skill check to repair a Major consequence then he could afford to get the Major consequence repaired on his ship, a Superb (+5) difficulty, and the 2 additional shifts could be used to speed up the whole repair process from a few days to an afternoon

If the Resource roll fails to cover the cost of the desired consequence the total can be used to repair a lesser consequence if it covers it, alternatively the repair yard can't get hold of the necessary parts today and they'll have to try make the Skill test again tomorrow. Resource bonuses used in the failed roll are not lost (such as rewards or salvaged equipment with a Resource Skill bonus)

Servicing

If the crew of a ship has failed a number of Maintenance Resource Skill checks (see page 65) for a ship and subsequently come in to some extra resources they can have the ship serviced to remove the effects of any wear and tear prior to the next Maintenance check. The cost is the standard Maintenance cost of the ship plus one for every failed Maintenance check.

Ship Improvement & Advancement

Lots of dry docks, star ports, space stations and Starship construction yards offer facilities to improve as well as repair ships. This often means selling old ship systems or Skills for the latest model (higher Skill) or more powerful versions. Perhaps adding new facilities in spare space or bolting on the necessary parts such as weapon turrets.

Improving a ship doesn't necessarily mean bolting on massive new hull sections though; you might be adding ship systems, upgrading a system or swapping systems all of which can be done within the existing hull or structure of the ship. The important thing to remember is you can't change a ship's Scale. If you have a Large Scale (4) Medium Freighter it will always be Scale (4) no matter what you add to it.

Most ships have some spare space for new systems, often higher Skills systems take up less space as they are more advanced and when they are advanced this can free up space within the hull for new Skills. All in all what we're trying to say is don't start trying to worry about where you can fit that new Average Flight Bay or Average Beam Weapon, in to your ship. Over time maybe you'll end up adding on turrets, hangars slung below the cargo bay, whatever.

There is a limit to the number of new Skills you can add to your ship. It's the Skill point value of a ship that is the next scale up. See the ship scale table on page 310 in Chapter 18 Starship Creation.

As ships improve further Stunts and Aspects may be added but only at key points in the campaign (similar to character advancement see page 244). The limit on additional Stunts and Aspects is the number of Stunts and Aspects of a ship of the next Scale up.

For example Brandon and Astraade have convinced the Admiral to outfit a Large Scale (4) Advanced Star Patrol Cutter for an upcoming mission into alien territory. They'd really like to add some extra weaponry and special equipment. They are limited to a to Skill point value of a Huge Scale (5) ship which is 20 points. They can therefore add another four Average (+1) Skills or a Fair (+2) and 2 Average (+1) Skills.

The costs of improvements are as follows:

Adding & Improving Ship Skills. – To add a Ship Skill at Average +1 or increase a Skill by 1 level (Average to Fair for example) costs 1 Skill point from *every* character during a character advancement session (the Story Teller will advise when this is) plus a Resource Skill check against the difficulty of the ship Skill to be improved plus two. A

Skill points can be saved up for more expensive Skills, but you must maintain the pyramid Skill structure of at least one more Skill than the tier above.

Addition of Ship Skills takes the final Skill level in weeks to complete. Extra shifts achieved on

the Resource Skill check can be used to decrease the number of weeks the improvement takes to a minimum of one week. The ship must be able to add a Skill at this level (see Starship Creation page 306). *For example adding an Average Cargo Hold to a ship is a difficulty of Good and takes one week.* If the player characters are not part of naval or security organisations then increase the difficulty by one if the ship Skill being added is an offensive or defensive system such as an energy shield or beam weapon.

If the Resource Skill check fails, the advancement Skill points are not lost, it's just the right piece of equipment could not be found yet. The characters can try again after a suitable time period has passed (perhaps a week) or when they visit a different shipyard.

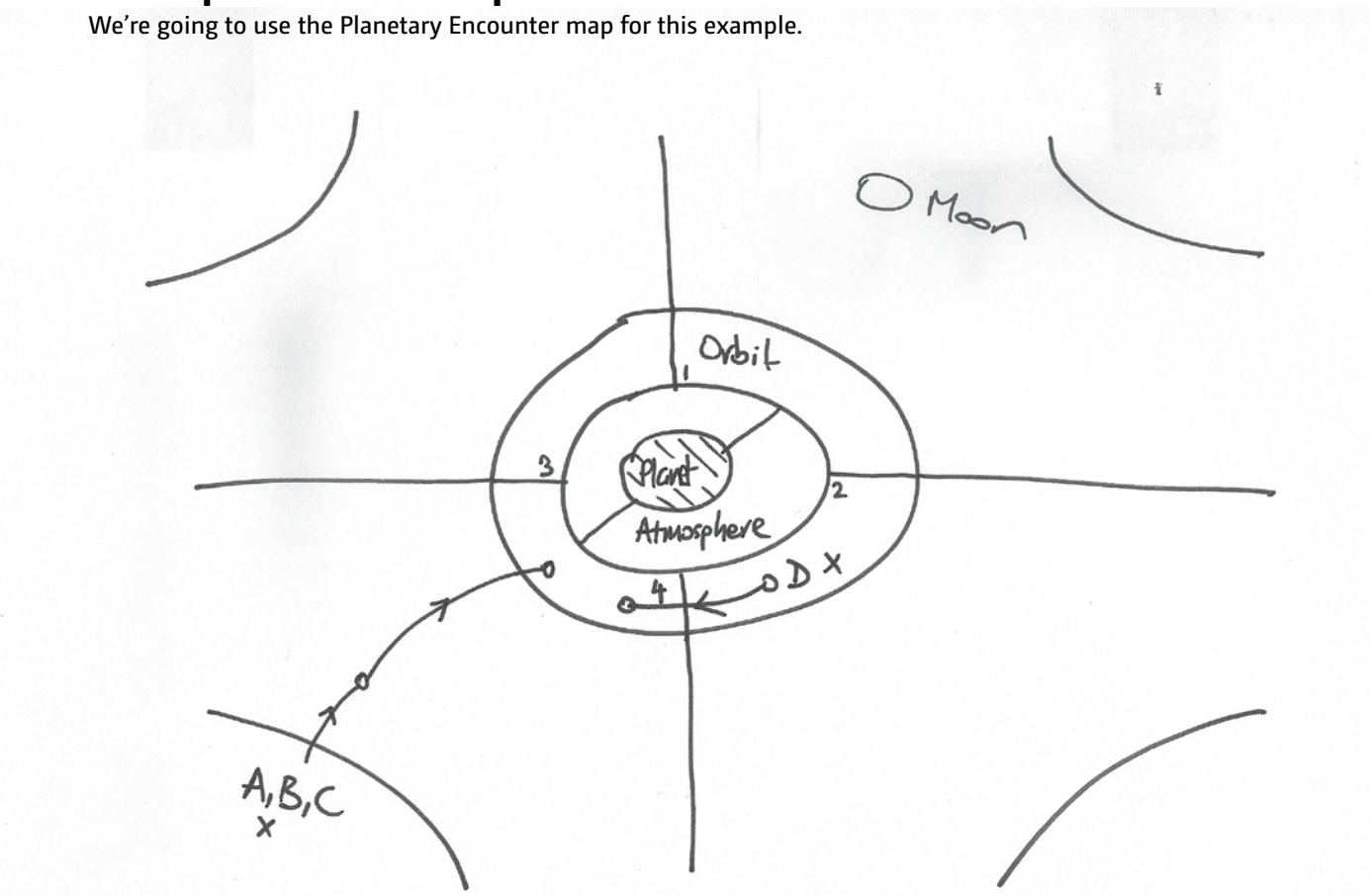
Swapping two ship Skills – The cost of exchanging two systems is the Skill level of the highest Skill level of the two Skills being swapped and takes the same Skill level in weeks to complete. Again extra shifts generated in the Resource Skill check can be used to reduce the number of weeks it takes to a minimum of one week. *For example swapping a Good (+3) Beam Weapon with a Great (+4) Cargo Hold is a Great (+4) Resource Skill check and if successful will take 4 weeks to remove the old Beam Weapon, re-build the now smaller cargo hold and add in the upgraded Beam Weapon.*

Fleet Actions

See Chapter 16 Star Empires & Battlefleets for full rules for running whole fleet engagements.

Starship Combat Example

We're going to use the Planetary Encounter map for this example.



[*Chapter 21: How To Do Things With Starships*]▷

The Starfly

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Armed Medium Freighter	Minor: Major: Severe: Extreme:	00000
Scale Large(4)		**System Stress** 00000

Skills

~~Fate Points: 9 Refresh: 9~~

Good(+3)	Projectile Weapon Projectile Weapon
Fair(+2)	Energy Shields Ship Systems EWS
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre Beam Weapon Beam Weapon Stardrive

Aspects

It's okay, it's harmless! Devastating Broadside
Overpowered! Ready for Action!

Stunts

Advanced EWS
Afterburner
Guided Missiles

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor: Major: N/A No armour on this ship Severe:	Minor: Major: Severe:

Yarrrr! (A, B, and C)

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Pirate Attack Ship	Minor: Major: Severe: Extreme:	000000
Scale Large(4) Advanced		**System Stress** 00000

Skills

Good(+3)	FTL Inhibitor Beam Weapon
Fair(+2)	Cargo Hold Manoeuvre Grappling System
Average(+1)	Ship Systems Marine Facility Beam Weapon Hardened Structure

Aspects

Wanted Dead or Alive Law Breaker
Overconfident Dirty Fighters

Stunts

Overload (Beam)
Reinforced Prow

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor: Major: N/A No armour on this ship Severe:	Minor: Major: N/A No shields on this ship Severe:

The Player Characters

The players have the Starfly, a Large (4) Scale freighter which has been armed and upgraded to the Skill point value of a Large Scale (4) Advanced ship with the purpose of luring in and destroying pirates. It has an undercover Star Patrol crew of 6 plus Brandon Carter and Fi-Sci's Astraade Menin in command. It's going to come up against three Pirate Attack Ships. Have a quick look at the templates following for details of the ships.

We basically took the standard Large Scale (4) freighter and changed some of the equipment round, and added some new systems or Skills. The ship has had its cargo hold replaced with two missile turrets (projectile weapons with the Guided Missiles Stunt). A scan of the ship would reveal it's more bulky than the average medium freighter but Brandon and Astraade are hoping the pirate's greed will lull them in to a false sense of security.

They've downgraded the Stardrive and in its place bolted on a powerful shield generator, plus an EWS system. The plan is to disable one pirate ship for questioning and destroy any others.

Note that the player's ship has a Fate Point Refresh of 9. Two of the three ship's Stunts are free due to the Fair (+2) Ship Systems Skill which allows the Skill level in free Stunts for player character ships. Due to the bonus 2 Stunts that the Ship System's Skill allows. That means the Refresh is reduced by only 1 to 9.

For the sake of this example we'll say Astraade has Starship Systems at Great (+4) whilst Brandon has had some training in ships to give him Starship Gunnery Good (+3). Astraade will be able to use his Starship Systems Skill to increase the power of their EWS attack to Great (+4) but Brandon won't be able to increase the Projectile Weapon attack as his Gunnery Skill is not greater than the ships'. Instead he'll be able to use his Gunnery Skill for the Beam Weapon attack since the ship's Skill is less than his Skill.

The Pirates

They have three standard Pirate Attack Ships and the crew have no notable Extra's with relevant Skills. The squads of Pirates on board will have Average (+1) combat Skills (Alertness, Guns and Weapons) if they get close enough to be used based on the level of the Marine Facilities aboard their ships. As each ship is not being controlled by a named character or Extra they do not have Fate points, although their Aspects can still be compelled by the players.

The Session

Brandon and Astraade have sat their cunningly disguised freighter in orbit around a world which they suspect is a helping local pirate ships. They were right and it's not long before a squadron of three pirate attack ships show up – at A, B, and C. The Freighter is at D, waiting for the pirate ships to turn up. Brandon's hoping that they'll get an ambush attack on one of the pirate ships and take out or at least heavily damage one of the ships before they get a chance to hurt the freighter.

Detecting The Pirates!

At this point we'll check for Detection. Both ships are out of range – the pirates only have a range of 1 Zone and the Freighter has a range of 2 zones due to it's better Ship Systems. Remember Astraade's higher Starship System's Skill does not affect the range of the sensors.

The Story Teller decides the ships will fly towards the planet and makes one maneuver roll for them to keep things simple at this stage. The roll is +2 which added to the Fair (+2) Maneuver Skill allows the ships to move four zones. However they move in to Orbital zone 4 and are now in Sensor range of the Freighter (but their sensors cannot detect the Freighter yet). Perfect, just what Brandon and Astraade were waiting for and they decide to attack immediately.

The player's ship has a Ship Systems Skill of Fair (+2), they could use Astraade's Great (+4) Starship Systems Skill but then he wouldn't be able to use it to boost the EWS attack they're planning to make if they detect the pirates.

Using just the Ship's System of Fair (+2) then they score a terrible -3 on the dice, but they get +2 for being on Alert so end up with a total of -1. The pirate's ships systems are Average (+1) but get -2 for the target lying in wait. Again the Story Teller decides to roll once for the pirates to keep things simple and scores +1 for a total of 0. Brandon invokes the Freighter's 'Always Ready for Action' Aspect for a Fate Point to get a +2 bonus, taking the freighter's Sensor total to +1. The freighter has successfully detected the pirate squadron!

Ambush! – The First Exchange

The players decide to attack now in the hope of taking out at least one of the pirate ships to even the odds. As the pirates are being ambushed by a ship lying in wait the players are going to get a +3 bonus to every ranged weapon attack this phase.

Astraade uses his Starship Systems Skill of Great (+4) to attack pirate ship B with the EWS system. He rolls a +3 for a total of +7. The pirate ship rolls +1 which with its Average (+1) Ship Systems gives it a total of +2. It has to take 5 System Stress and decides to tick off one stress box and take a Minor system consequence of 'Ship's System's sparking'. There's sparks coming out of a few consoles in the pirate's bridge but nothing serious just yet.

Note the freighter does have the Advanced EWS which allows it to act as one Skill level higher but Astraade's Great (+4) Starship Systems Skill is higher so it's not much use, though it would have been useful if Astraade had taken a different action.

Before the freighter attacks everyone makes Maneuver Skill checks for their defense. With Fair (+2) Maneuver Skills and their dice rolls the pirates get the following totals;

- Ship A +4
- Ship B +3
- Ship C +3

The freighter with its Average (+1) Maneuver Skill gets a lucky total of +6 with the dice roll of +5.

As they won initiative, the Star Patrol crew of the freighter let loose with a volley of missiles from the Projectile Weapons at Ship C. Both Projectile Weapon's Skills are Good (+3) so we take one +3, add a dice roll, +1, add the ambush bonus of +3 for a total of +7. Less the pirate ship's +3 defence, the attack hits for 4 stress so the second Projectile Weapon's +3 Skill level is added for a total of 7 Structural Stress damage. The pirate ship takes a Severe Consequence (-6 stress) of 'FTL Inhibitor offline' and crosses off 1 Structural Stress. The ship has 6 Structural Stress due to the Hardened Structure.

Brandon then fires the Beam Weapons at pirate ship C. His Good (+3) Starship Gunnery Skill is used for the attack instead of the Average (+1) Beam Weapon Skill. He adds the +3 ambush bonus and rolls -1 on the dice for a total of +5. Less the +3 defence leaves 2 Stress which are ticked off pirate ship C's Structural Stress track leaving it with 3 structural stress.

As the freighter attacked it's now been detected by the pirates. They elect to stop in this zone and attack. Each ship can make one attack with its Good (+3) Beam Weapon and if it hits will inflict an additional +1 stress for the Average (+1) Beam Weapon.

With dice rolls, here's the total's for the pirate ship's attacks:

- Ship A +1 – not beating the freighter's defence this misses
- Ship B +5 – equaling the freighter's defence this hits and inflicts 1 stress from the second Beam Weapon but this is absorbed by the freighter's Fair (+2) Energy Shield.
- Ship C +6 – beating the freighter defence this hits and inflicts the surplus +1 shift and the +1 for the second Beam Weapon for +2 however the freighter's energy shield also absorbs this.

At the end of the first exchange pirate ship B has a minor ship system consequence and has lost 1 system stress and pirate ship C has a Severe structural consequence and is down to three structural stress

Each ship checks for initiative for the next exchange. The freighter wins and decides to move in to the same zone as the pirates and try and use its Devastating Broadside Aspect up close. Since it's only moving one zone we don't bother rolling any dice, it's automatic.

Second Exchange

The freighter has won initiative and so Astraade makes an EWS attack during the special action's phase. His Great (+4) Starship Systems Skill plus a fantastic dice roll of +4 for a total of +8 versus pirate ship B's Ship Systems total (it rolls -5) of -4 causes a massive 12 points of system stress to pirate ship B. Its system's are fried as it can only take an Extreme consequence (-8 stress) and four system stress which takes it out. Pirate ship B is dead in space or 'Taken Out'.

For the pirate's Special Action, both ship's A & C try for a grapple to see if they can get their blood thirsty pirate squads in to board the freighter. Using their Fair (+2) Grappling System they try to grapple the freighter. With dice rolls they get a total of 0 and +3 respectively. The freighter makes a Maneuver Skill check to avoid the grapple attempts and gets a total of +4 so both attempts fail.

That was lucky, now for the ranged weapons.

Everyone makes Maneuver Skill checks for their defense. With Fair (+2) Maneuver Skills and their dice rolls the pirates get the following totals;

- Ship A +7
- Ship B Taken out
- Ship C +2
- The freighter with its Average (+1) Maneuver Skill gets a roll of +1 for a total of +2

The freighter won initiative again, so the Star Patrol crew fire off a volley of missiles at pirate ship C. They roll a +2 for a total of +5. Less pirate ship C's defence of +2 they get a total of +3 so hit home. As it's a hit they add the second Good (+3) Projectile Weapon Skill for a total of +6 and Brandon invokes the 'Devastating Broadside' Aspect for another +2 bonus at the cost of a Fate point. A whopping +8 stress worth of missiles slam in to pirate ship C and it takes an Extreme consequence 'hull breaches, crew in space survival suits' to absorb the 8 stress.

Brandon then fires the Beam Weapons at pirate ship C. His Good (+3) Starship Gunnery Skill is used for the attack instead of the Average (+1) Beam Weapon Skill. He rolls +4 on the dice for a total of +5. Less the +2 defence leaves 3 Stress. Pirate ship C takes a Minor consequence, 'systems offline' to absorb the 3 Stress and keep themselves alive, barely, but out of the picture.

This leaves just pirate ship A to fight back. It fires its Good (+3) Beam Weapon and rolls a +4 for a total of +7. The Story Teller grins evilly and waves a Fate point at the players, "err you know all that weaponry is overloading the freighter's system's somewhat, do you think its 'Overpowered'?" Astraade goes with it and says "Brandon! The power's just gone off line, the shields are down!"

The pirate's attack hits home with its +7 total versus the freighter's defense of +2. With no shields the freighter has to take 5 Structural Stress. The players agree to take a Minor consequence, 'Stardrive flickering' and cross off 1 Structural Stress.

Finally we check for Initiative for the next Exchange. Pirate ship A rolls +2 and so gets a total of +3 and the freighter rolls +1 and so only gets a total of +2. For once the pirates have won initiative.

At the end of the second exchange pirate ship A is unscratched whilst the freighter has a Minor consequence and 1 Structural Stress.

Third Exchange

In the Special Actions phase, the pirate ship tries for a grapple again, rolls +3 for a total of +5 with its Fair (+2) Grappling System. The freighter is clumsy and rolls a -2 for a total of -1 and is caught by the pirate's tractor beam. Next exchange the pirates will be able to board the freighter.

Astraade goes for an EWS attack and rolls +2 for a total of +6 with his Great (+4) Starship System's Skill. The pirate ship's Ship System Skill of +1 and a roll of +2 gives a total of +3 meaning one System Stress goes through. Astraade is targeting the Grappling System.

During the Maneuver phase the freighter tries to break free and rolls a +1 to add to its Average (+1) Maneuver Skill for a total of +2. With the pirate's Fair (+2) Grappling System and a roll of -1 for a total of +1 it succeeds and pulls away from the disappointed pirates. .

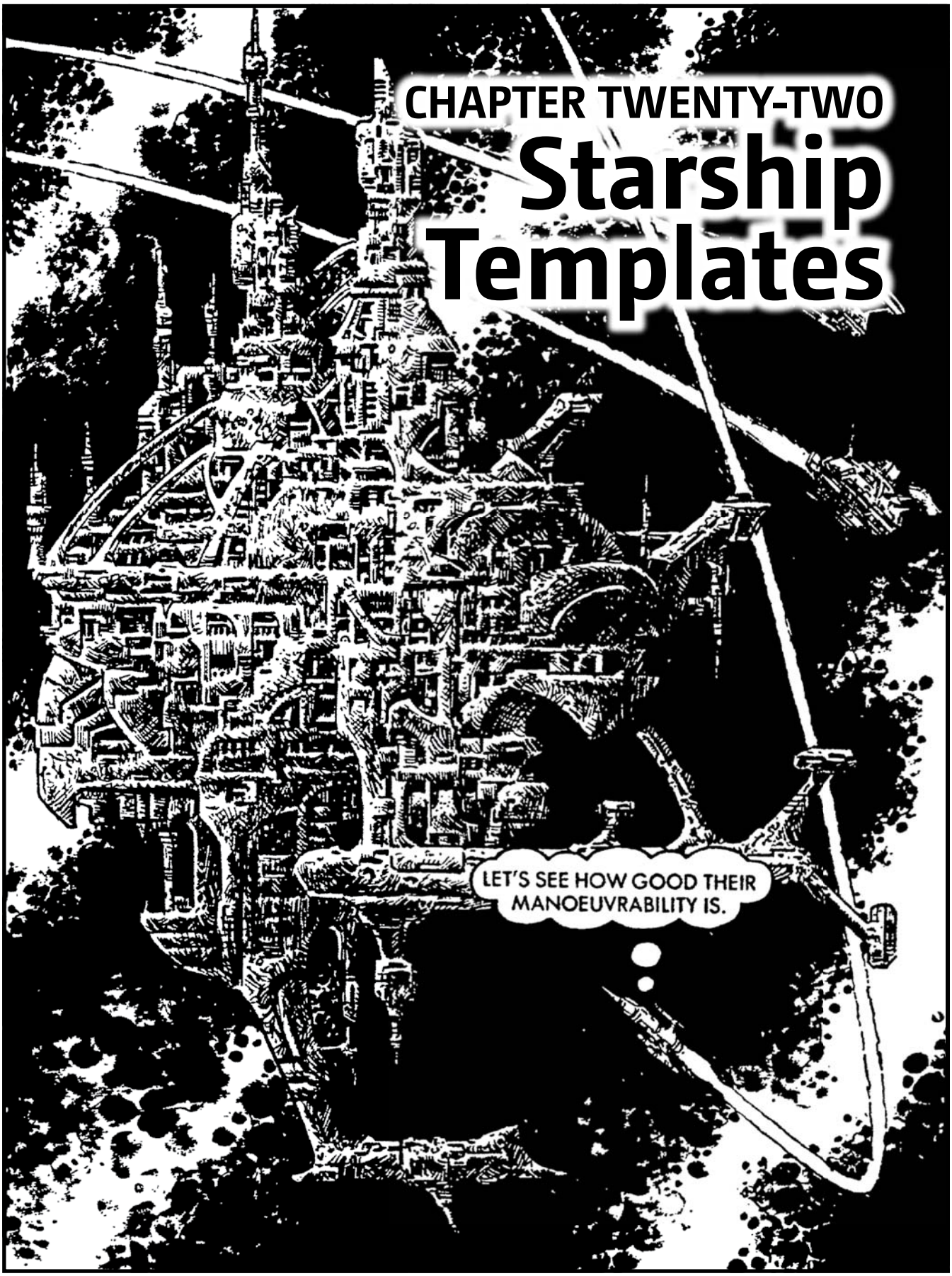
Both ships now roll for defence. Pirate ship A rolls -2, with a Maneuver Skill of Fair (+2) this is defence of 0. Brandon and Astraade can't wait to shoot! Their defence roll is +1 with their Maneuver Skill of Average (+1) for a total of +2

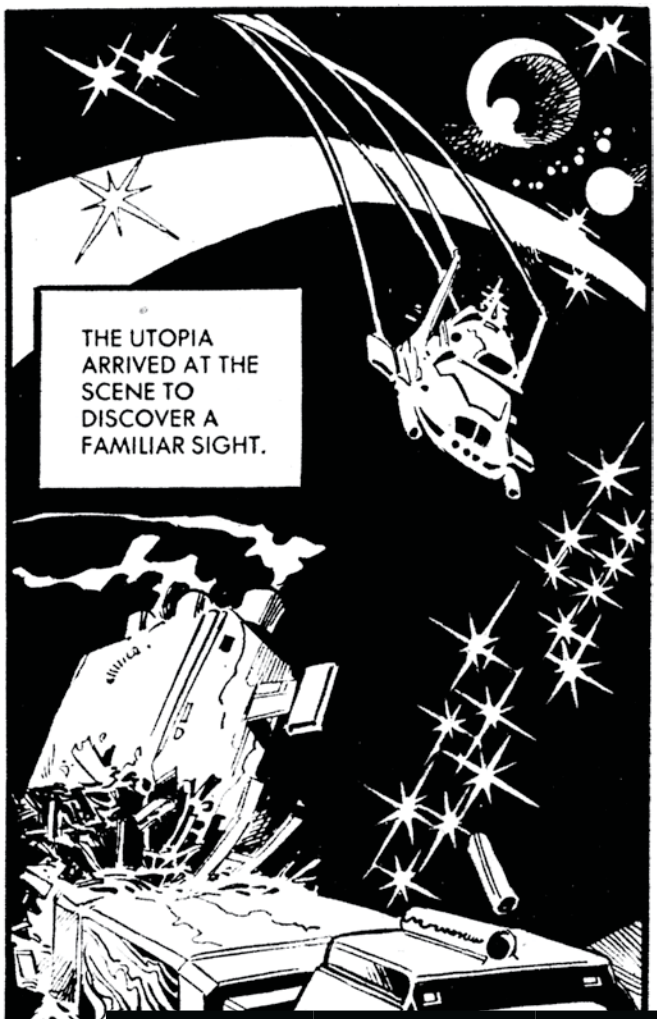
Pirate ship A then attacks, firing its Good (+3) Beam Weapon and rolling +1, for a totall of +4 Stress. With the freighter's +2 defence only 3 Stress is inflicted. 2 stress are absorbed by the Energy Shields and the crew of the freighter decide to take 1 structural stress.

The Star Patrol crew now let rip with missiles. The player's roll a massive +5 for a total of +8 with the Good (+3) Projectile Weapon Skill. Brandon invokes the Devastating Broadside Aspect again for another Fate Point to gain a +2 bonus to make it +10. Of course it hits home with the pirate ship's terrible defence of 0. As a result the additional Good (+3) Projectile Weapon's Skill level is added causing 13 structural stress damage. The pirate ship takes an Extreme (-8) and a Major (-4) consequence plus 1 Structural Stress.

Brandon's Beam Weapon attack of Good (+3) for his Starship Gunnery Skill plus a dice roll of +2 for a total of +5 goes right through the pirate ship's defence inflicting another 5 stress damage (with the additional beam weapon). As the pirate ship can't take any more consequences the 5 stress causes it to be Taken Out and it too disintegrates in a ball of flame.

Brandon and Astraade are now free to board the disabled pirate ships.


CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO
Starship Templates
LET'S SEE HOW GOOD THEIR MANOEUVRABILITY IS.



Starship Templates

The following list gives examples of typical Starships found in Starblazer Adventures. They are intended both as a tool for Story Tellers (saving the time needed to create ships for adventures), and as guidelines for players designing a ship for their own use during the game.

Ships with Scales listed as Advanced indicate that although the ship is of the specified Scale factor, it has an extended Skills pyramid due to being a military or specialist design. Ships can be expanded beyond these starting points through ship development (see Ship Improvement page 362). Some suggested Stunts are included with ship templates.

Not all these templates conform to the design guidelines listed later on (e.g. the Advanced Alien Cruiser, we include this to give an example of a ship with an Epic Skill that the Story Teller might want to throw in to make things more interesting).

You can find a blank Starship template on page 607.

Scale 2

The only ship at this scale is an un-manned sensor probe carried by larger ships

Starship Type	**Consequences**	**Structural Stress**
Sensor Probe	Minor:	☐
Scale	Major:	**System Stress**
Small(2)	Severe:	☐
	Extreme:	

Skills

Average(+1)	Manoeuvre Ship Systems (Sensors+comms only- treat as the Skill level of the ship that launched the probe)

Aspects

Choose 2 Aspects

Stunts

None

Consequences (Armour)	**Consequences (Shields)**
n/a	n/a

Scale 3

Fighters

Light or heavy fighters are the stable defence for fleets, space stations and planets. They are often along with torpedo bombers to attacks large targets in squadron formations.

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Light Fighter	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Medium(3)	Extreme:	☐☐☐

Skills

Fair (+2)	Manoeuvre
Average(+1)	Beam Weapon Ablative Armour

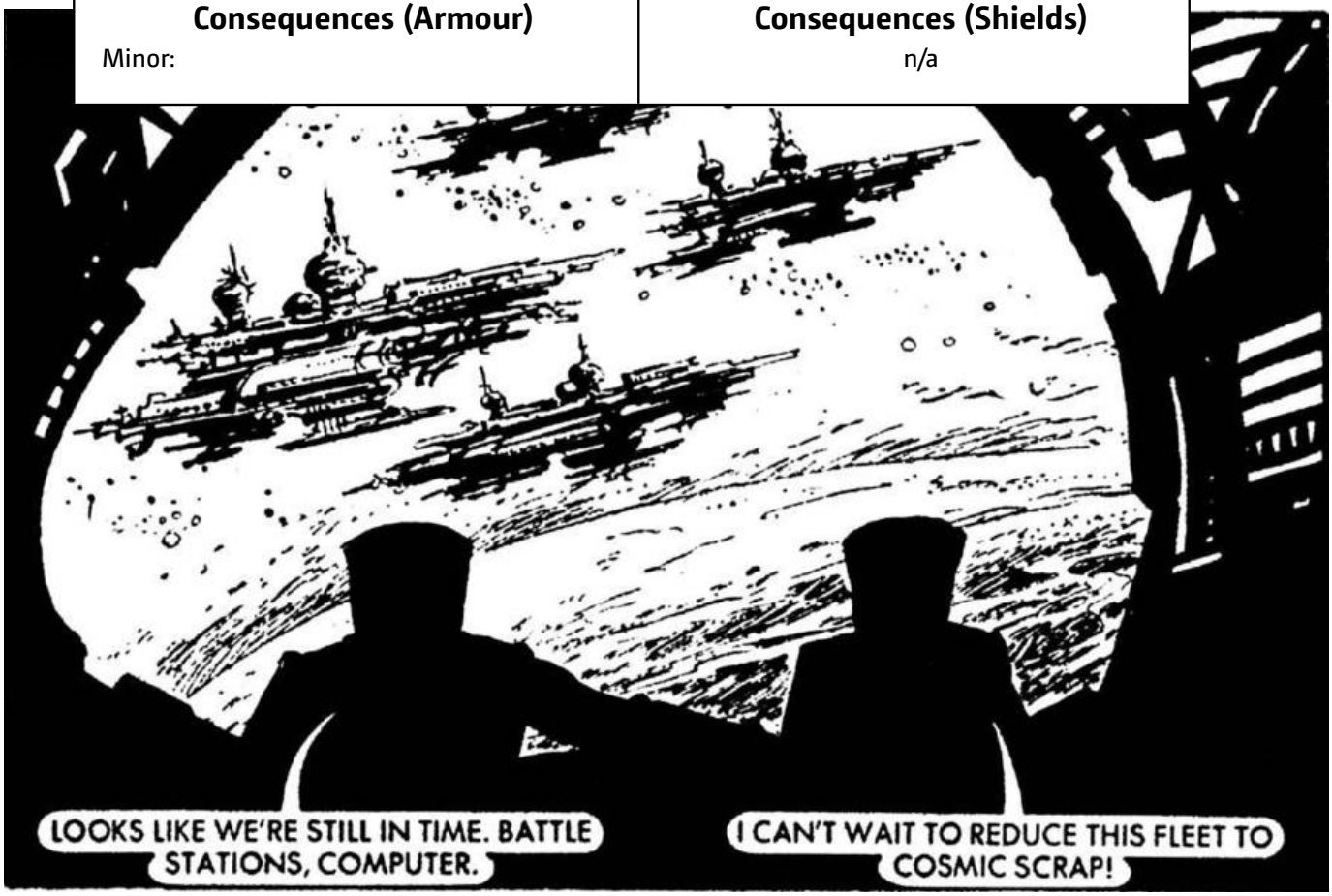
Aspects

Highly Manoeuvrable
Choose up to 2 more Aspects

Stunts

Afterburner

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor:	n/a



[*Chapter 22: Starship Templates*]▷

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Heavy Fighter	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Medium(3) Advanced	Extreme:	☐☐☐

Skills

Fair (+2)	Beam Weapon Beam Weapon
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre Energy Shield Stardrive

Aspects

Highly Manoeuvrable
Choose up to 2 more Aspects

Stunts

Afterburner Overload (Beam)

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
n/a	Minor:

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Torpedo Bomber	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Medium(3) Advanced	Extreme:	☐☐☐

Skills

Fair (+2)	Ablative Armour Torpedo Launcher
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre Energy Shield Targeting Computer

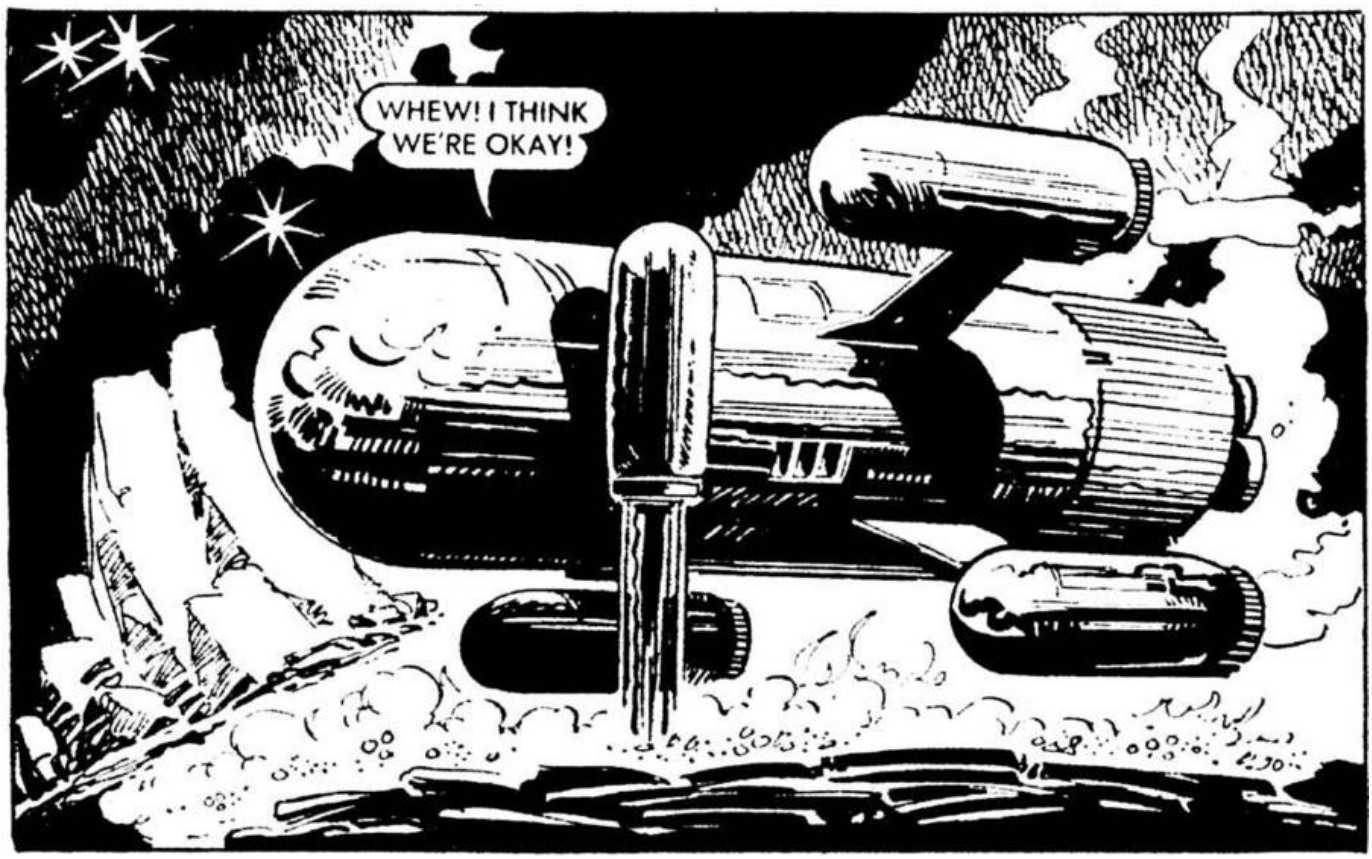
Aspects

Choose up to 3 Aspects

Stunts

Afterburner Show Your Better Side

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor: Major:	Minor:



Shuttles, Scouts and Light Freighters

Often built around similar frames these light craft can be piloted by one crew.

Starship Type	**Consequences**	**Structural Stress**
Shuttle	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Medium(3) Advanced	Extreme:	☐☐☐

Skills

Fair (+2)	EWS Advanced Sensor Suite
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre Energy Shield Ablative Armour

Aspects

Highly Manoeuvrable
Choose up to 2 more Aspects

Stunts

Afterburner Advanced EWS

Consequences (Armour)	**Consequences (Shields)**
Minor:	Minor:

Usually carried above larger ships in flight bays or used by space stations to carry crew or passengers planet side. The Shuttle can carry a total of 2 crew and 12 passengers for short hops.

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Light Freighter	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Medium(3)	Extreme:	☐☐☐

Skills

Fair (+2)	Cargo Hold
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre Stardrive

Aspects

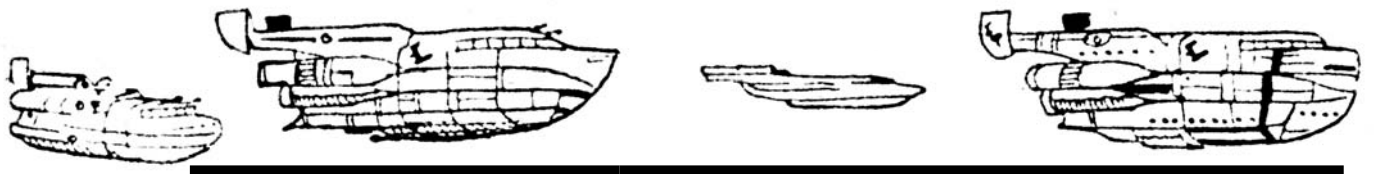
Choose up to 3 Aspects

Stunts

Atmospheric Entry

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
n/a	n/a

This is the 'man with a van' of the future. Enough space to carry a small container's worth of goods, the light freighter is a everyone's first step on the business ladder. The Light Freighter can carry 2 crew and 2 passengers



Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Scout Ship	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Medium(3)	Extreme:	☐☐☐

Skills

Fair (+2)	Advanced Sensor Suite
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre Stardrive

Aspects

Choose up to 3 Aspects

Stunts

Track FTL

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
n/a	n/a

The Scout is found around the unexplored fringes of space as the many different services charged with exploring, finding things (and usually shooting them) push ever outwards.

Scale 4

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Medium Freighter	Minor:	☐☐☐☐☐
	Major:	
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Large(4)	Extreme:	☐☐☐☐☐

Skills

Good (+3)	Cargo Hold
Fair (+2)	Stardrive Ship Systems
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre Beam Weapon Grappling System

Aspects

Choose up to 4 Aspects

Stunts

Atmospheric Entry Livestock Area

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
n/a	n/a

This is your typical freighter used by smugglers and legitimate traders across the galaxy. With enough basic systems to defend themselves it's a good basic building block of a trading business. The Medium Freighter can carry 4 crew and 4 passengers.

THEY'VE FIRED A WARNING SHOT.
RIGHT! GIVE ME FULL POWER ON MAIN STARDRIVE BOOST.
THEY'LL NEVER OUTRUN THAT PATROL SHIP IN THIS OLD CRATE!

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Passenger Liner	Minor: Major:	□□□□□
Scale	Severe: Extreme:	**System Stress**
Large(4)		□□□□□

Skills

Good (+3)	Cargo Hold
Fair (+2)	Stardrive Ship Systems
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre Cargo Hold Cargo Hold

Aspects

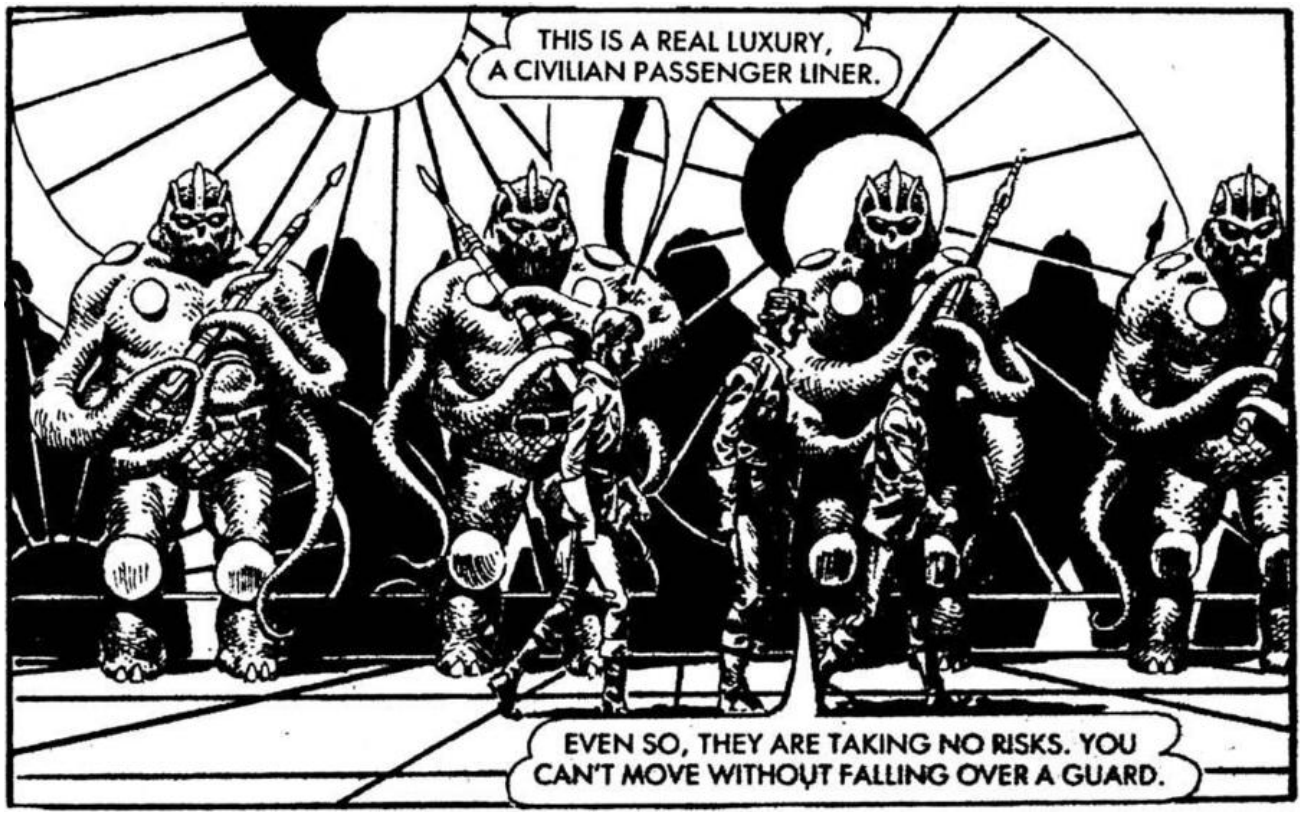
Choose up to 4 Aspects

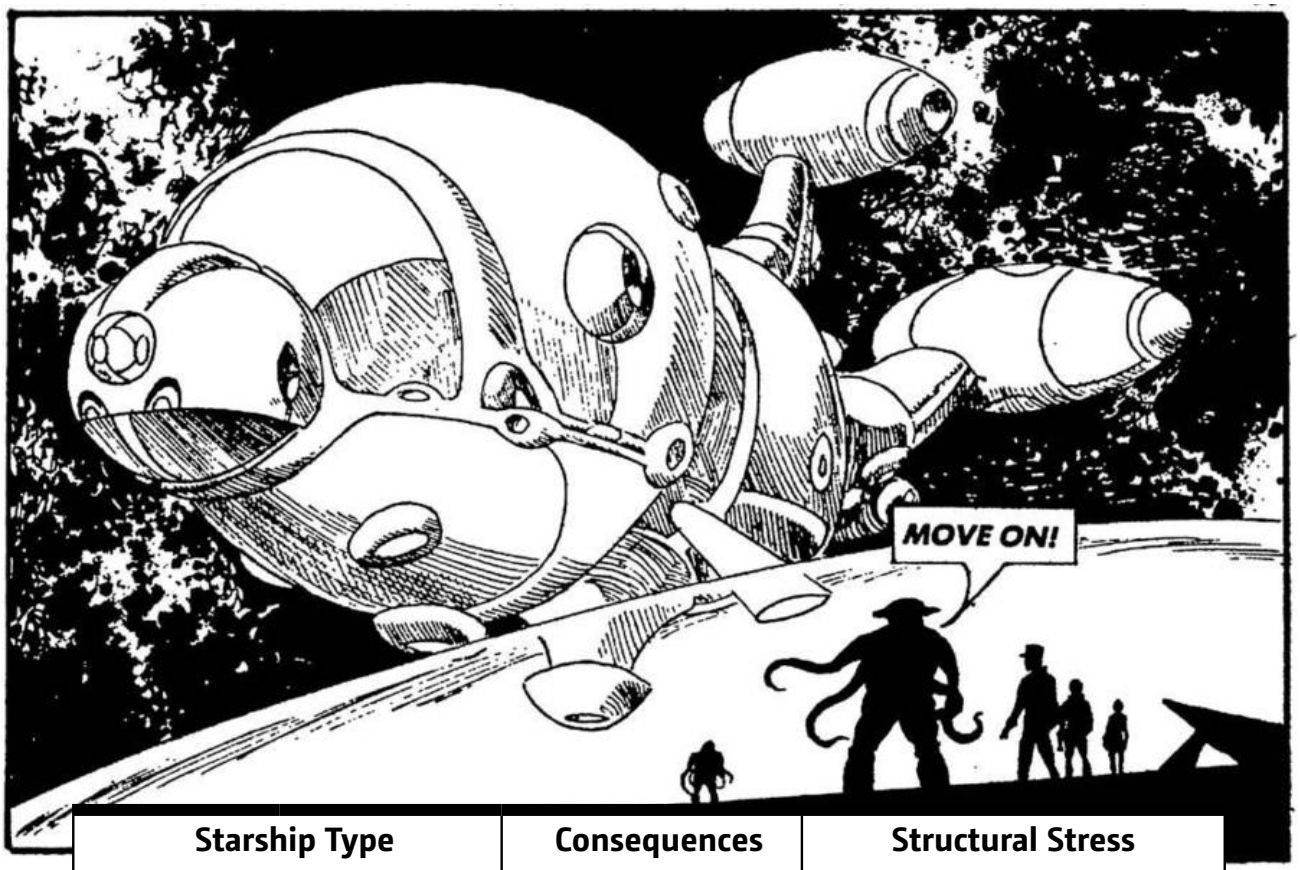
Stunts

Atmospheric Entry Passenger Quarters

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
n/a	n/a

The passenger liner is a regular sight across the galaxy. There are basically two versions, one with staterooms for long journeys and one that has rows of seats and some recreation areas for shorter journeys. It carries up to 300 passengers and their luggage for short journeys of up to 24 hours or for longer journeys 90 passengers can be accommodated in staterooms of varying sizes. Typically the ship will carry 10 crew and upwards of 30 staff to look after the passengers. Note: As the ship has the Passenger Quarters stunt, the Good (+3) Cargo Hold is treated as the passenger quarters with the Average (+1) cargo holds for goods and luggage.


THIS IS A REAL LUXURY, A CIVILIAN PASSENGER LINER.
EVEN SO, THEY ARE TAKING NO RISKS. YOU CAN'T MOVE WITHOUT FALLING OVER A GUARD.



Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Pirate Attack Ship	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐☐☐
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Large(4) Advanced	Extreme:	☐☐☐☐☐

Skills

Good (+3)	FTL Inhibitor	Beam Weapon		
Fair (+2)	Cargo Hold	Manoeuvre	Grappling System	
Average(+1)	Ship Systems	Marine Facility	Beam Weapon	Hardened Structure

Aspects

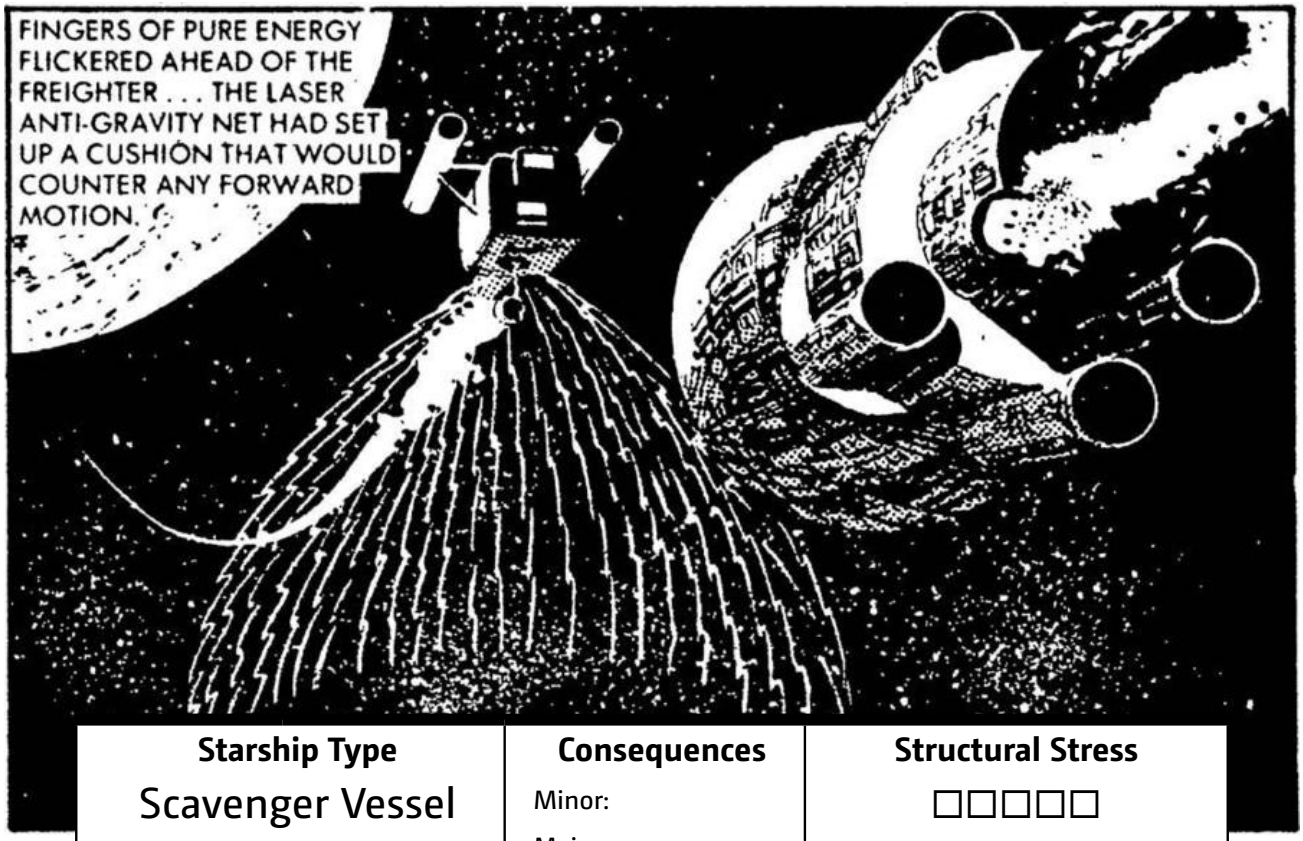
Wanted Dead or Alive	Law Breaker	Choose up to 2 Aspects

Stunts

Overload (Beam)	Reinforced Prow

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
n/a	n/a

Usually appearing in three's the Pirate Attack Ship is the bane of passenger liners and freighters and can give Star Patrol Cutter's a challenge. Loaded with firepower they're eager for a fight. Their standard tactic is to cripple a ship, then get in close to use squads of pirates to board, killing or kidnapping those aboard for slavery and taking anything of value. The ship carries a squad of ten pirates for boarding and another 10 crew.


FINGERS OF PURE ENERGY FLICKERED AHEAD OF THE FREIGHTER . . . THE LASER ANTI-GRAVITY NET HAD SET UP A CUSHION THAT WOULD COUNTER ANY FORWARD MOTION.

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Scavenger Vessel	Minor: Major:	□□□□□
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Large(4)	Extreme:	□□□□□

Skills

Good (+3)	Salvage Equipment
Fair (+2)	Cargo Hold Cargo Hold
Average(+1)	Ship Systems Manoeuvre Sensor Suite

Aspects

Choose up to 4 Aspects

Stunts

Salvage Hazardous Items Dangerous Cargo Containment

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
n/a	n/a

The Scavenger makes use of the many galactic battlefields, vast areas of drifting Starship wreckage that were too badly damaged to be worth retrieving by their respective sides or so old that the races involved are long distant legends. Scavenger ships spend long months journey to distance sites, hoping to make a big score, retrieve something really useful or of value to their customers back home. Scavenger crews are often the roughest aside from pirates, enduring dangers and hardships in their work that few would choose, but they are also the source of great stories and legends.

Mass produced to guard every corner of the galaxy and uphold the law, the Star Patrol Cutter is the standard patrol ship used to guard colonies, star routes, space stations and border worlds. The ship is effectively a small mobile police station, carrying a crew of ten who all double as Star Patrol officers and troopers. The ship can also carry up to ten prisoners in cells and four passengers on short journeys.

Starship Type	**Consequences**	**Structural Stress**
Star Patrol Cutter	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐☐☐
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Large(4) Advanced	Extreme:	☐☐☐☐☐

Skills

Good (+3)	Manoeuvre	Energy Shields		
Fair (+2)	Stardrive	Beam Weapon	Advanced Sensor Suite	
Average(+1)	Reflective Armour	Ship Systems	Beam Weapon	EWS

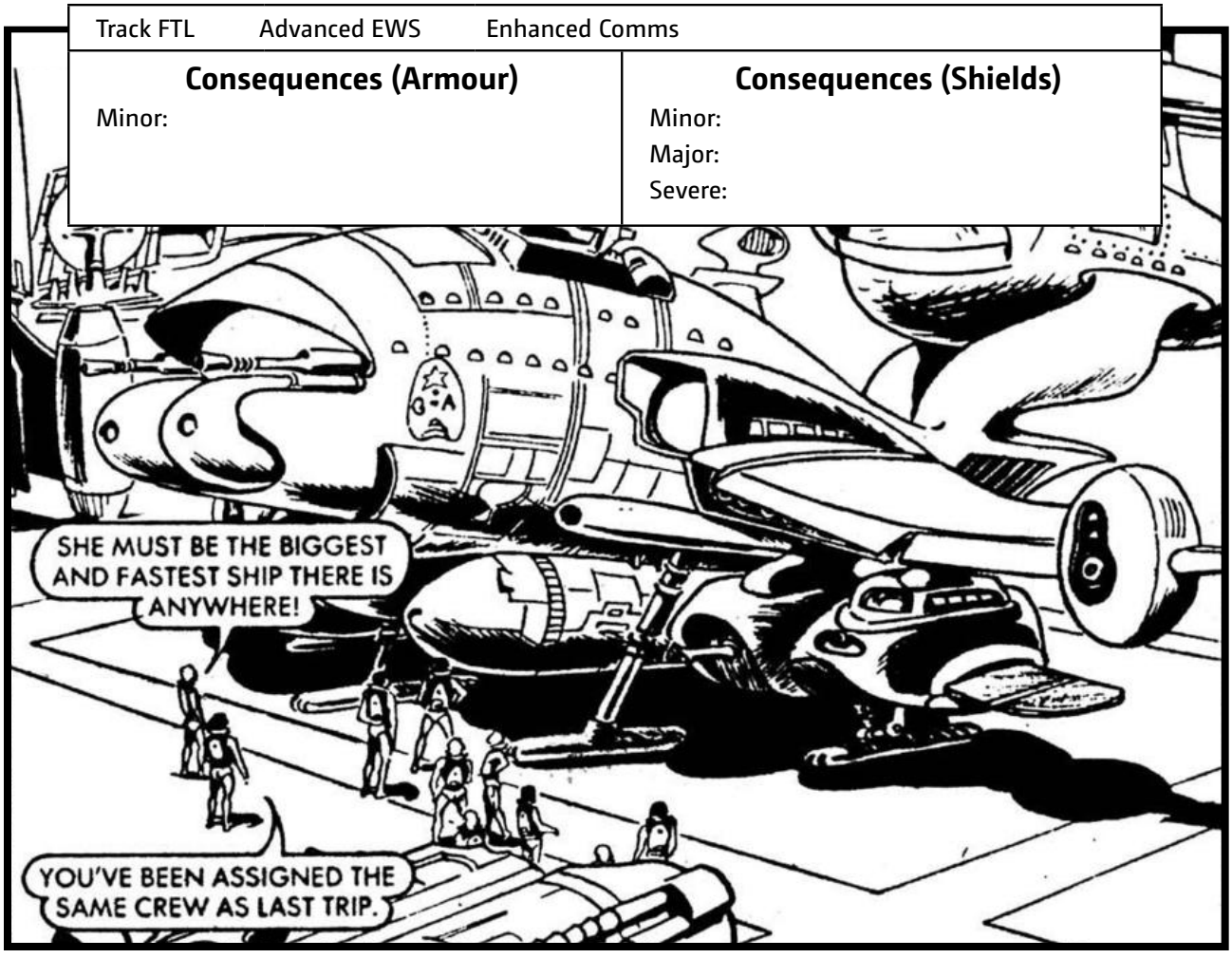
Aspects

Choose up to 4 Aspects

Stunts

Track FTL Advanced EWS Enhanced Comms

Consequences (Armour)	**Consequences (Shields)**
Minor:	Minor: Major: Severe:



Scale 5

The Heavy Freighter carries millions of tons of goods across the galaxy between star systems and has a crew of ten. The typical Heavy Freighter carries two loads of goods with a Resource value of Good (+3) each however with the Cargo Pod stunt this ship can carry up to ten times this for major hauling jobs.

Starship Type	**Consequences**	**Structural Stress**
Heavy Freighter	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐☐☐
Scale	Severe: Extreme:	**System Stress**
Huge(5)		☐☐☐☐☐

Skills

Good (+3)	Cargo Hold	Cargo Hold		
Fair (+2)	Stardrive	Ship Systems	Cargo Hold	Cargo Hold
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre	Beam Weapon	Grappling System	Salvage System
	Energy Shield	Beam Weapon		

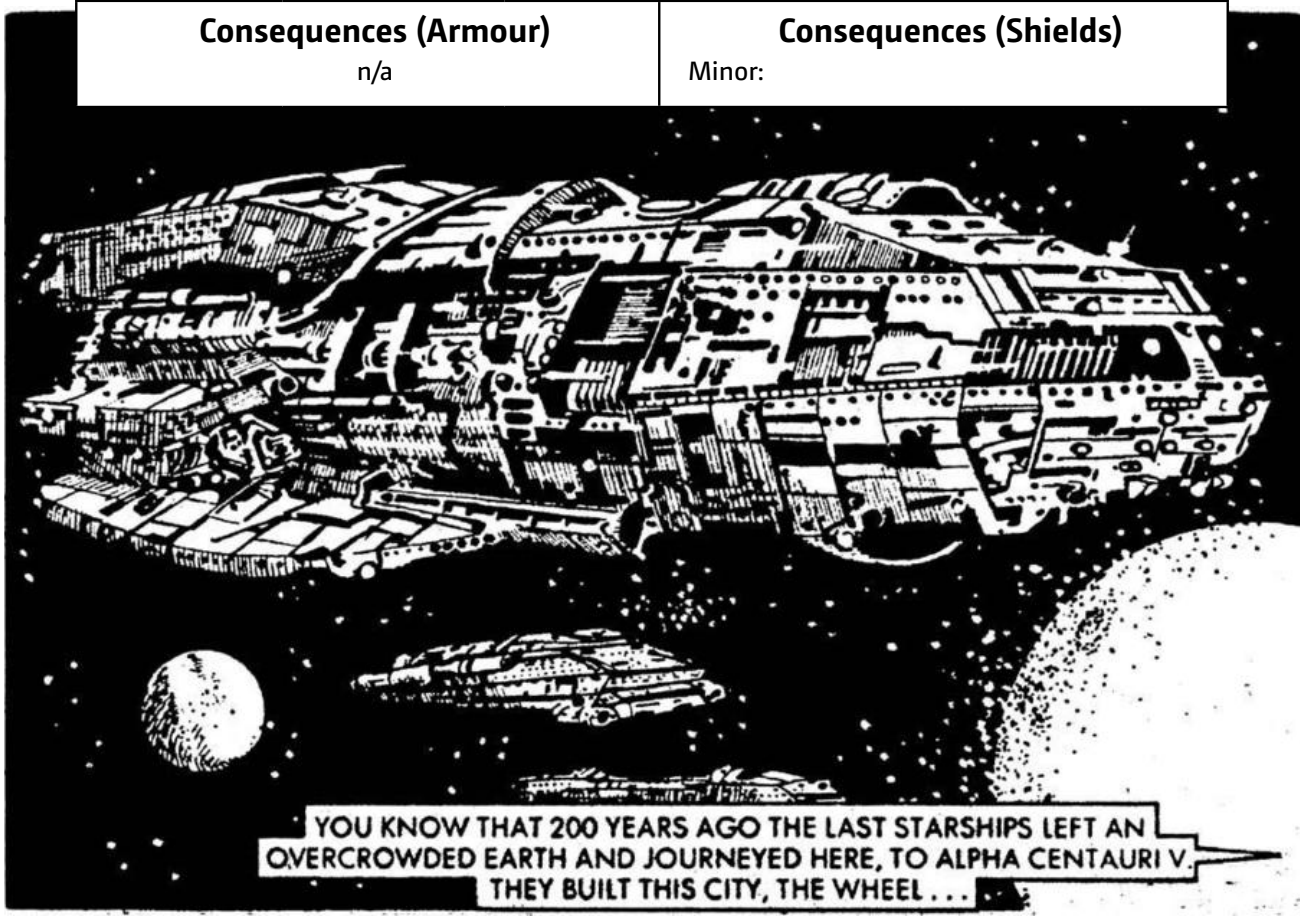
Aspects

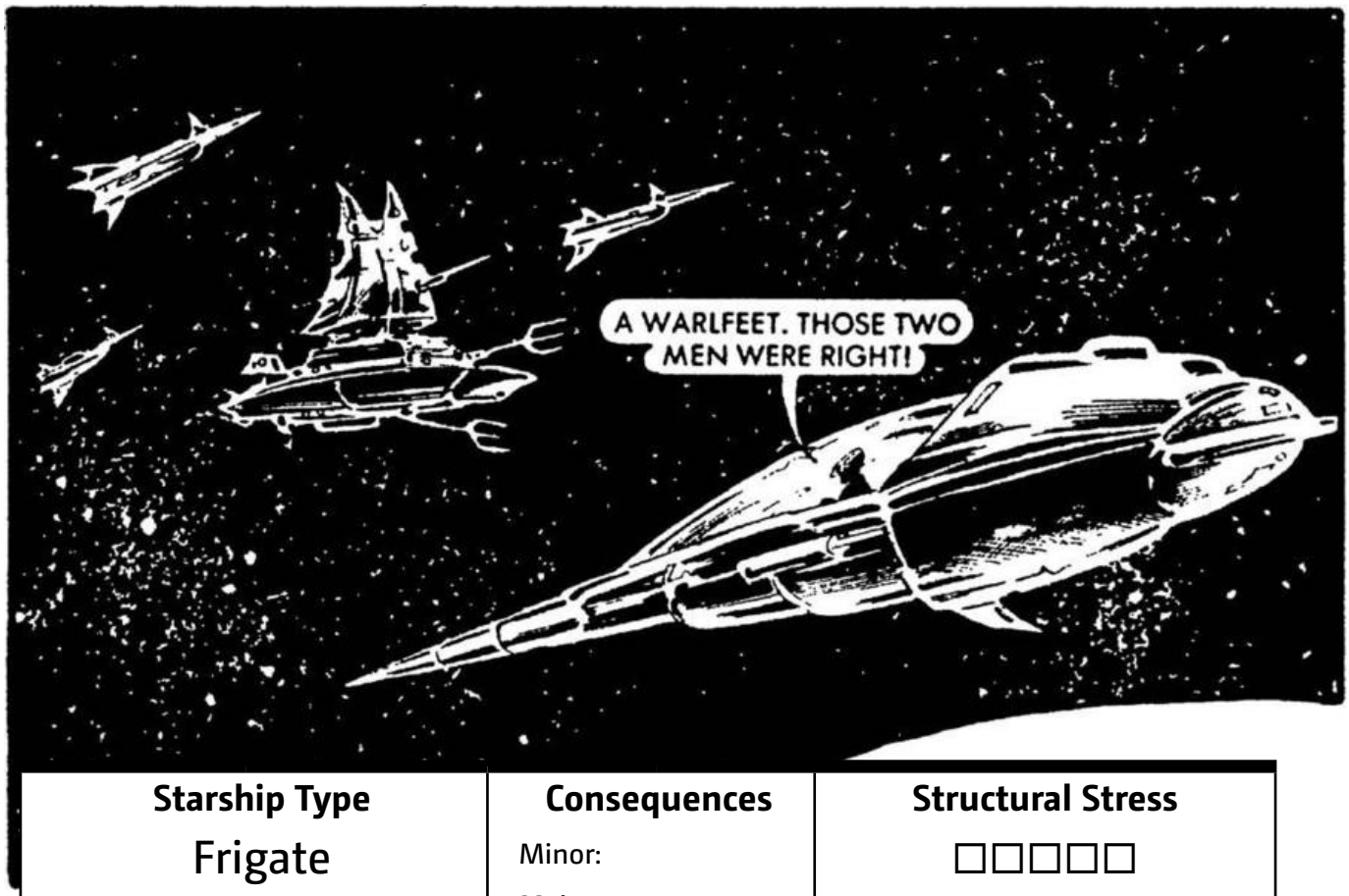
Choose up to 5 Aspects

Stunts

Atmospheric Entry Point Defence Cargo Pods

Consequences (Armour)	**Consequences (Shields)**
n/a	Minor:


YOU KNOW THAT 200 YEARS AGO THE LAST STARSHIPS LEFT AN OVERCROWDED EARTH AND JOURNEYED HERE, TO ALPHA CENTAURI V.
THEY BUILT THIS CITY, THE WHEEL . . .



Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Frigate	Minor: Major:	□□□□□
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Huge(5)	Extreme:	□□□□□

Skills

Good (+3)	Manoeuvre EWS
Fair (+2)	Stardrive Ship Systems Targeting Computer Beam Weapon
Average(+1)	Projectile Weapon Beam Weapon Energy Shield Projectile Weapon Beam Weapon Ablative Armor

Aspects

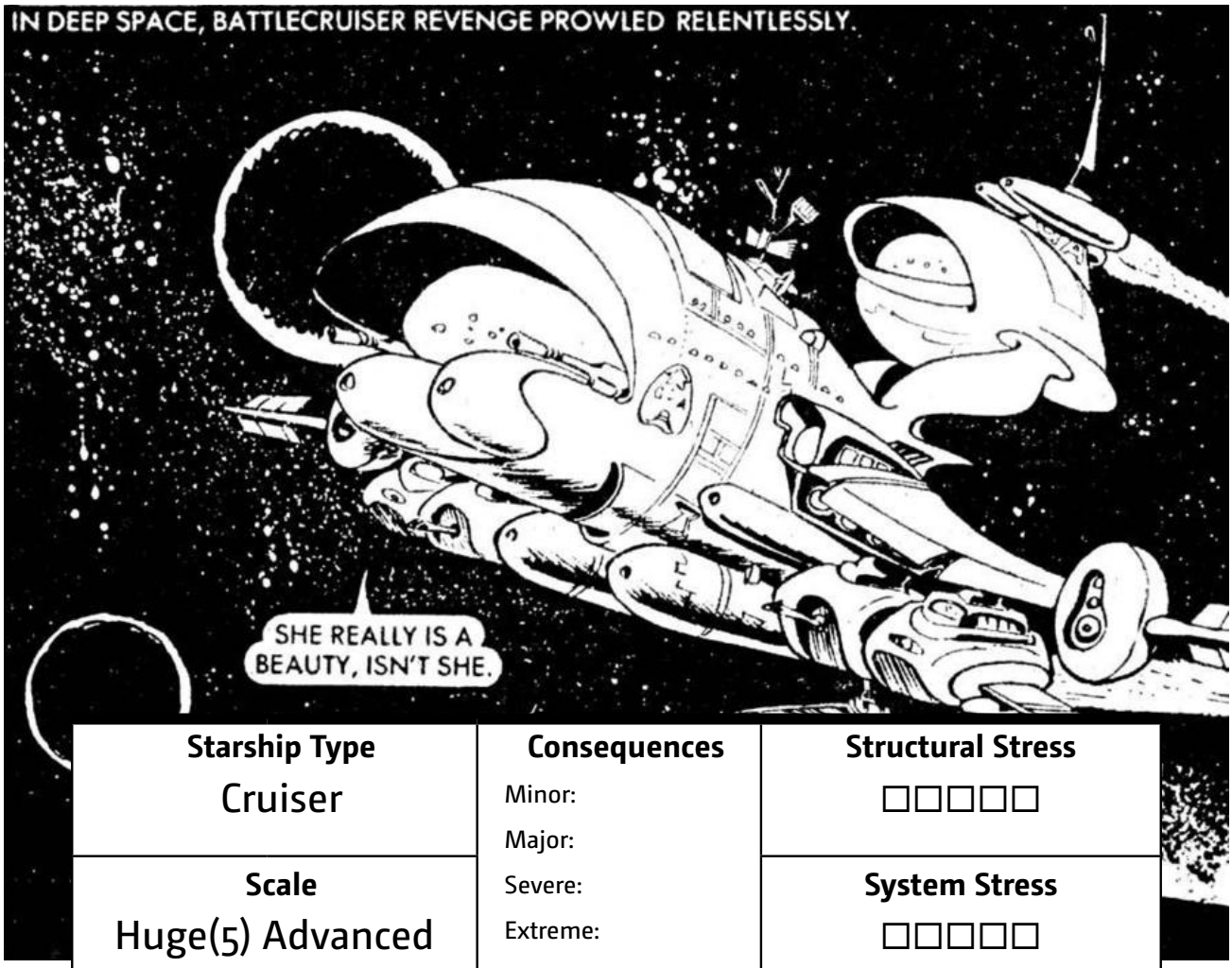
Choose up to 5 Aspects

Stunts

Point Defence Overload (beam) Overdrive

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor:	Minor:

The Frigate is the standard patrol ship of the navy and guards the flanks of naval fleets. In large numbers the frigate is an effective battle platform able to deliver crippling electronic warfare attacks as well as basic attacks. The ship is crewed by a compliment of thirty officers and crew.



Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Cruiser	Minor: Major:	□□□□□
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Huge(5) Advanced	Extreme:	□□□□□

Skills

Great (+4)	Projectile Weapon Beam Weapon
Good (+3)	Energy Shield Ablative Armour Ship Systems
Fair (+2)	Stardrive Flight Bay Manoeuvre Targeting Computer
Average(+1)	Projectile Weapon Grappling System Beam Weapon Repair System Advanced Sensor Suite

Aspects

Choose up to 5 Aspects

Stunts

Point Defence (beam) Guided Missiles Rapid Fire Repel Boarders

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor:	Minor:
Major:	Major:
Severe:	Severe:

The Cruiser is the standard capital ship of a battle fleet, designed to deliver crippling blows to enemy ships and with enough defences to take a lot of punishment. The ship is manned by a compliment of 100 crew and officers. It carries two shuttles in its flight bay.

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Advanced Alien Cruiser	Minor: Major:	□□□□□
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Huge(5) Alien	Extreme:	□□□□□

Skills

Epic (+7)	Exotic Weapon
Fantastic (+6)	Ship Systems Shroud Generator
Superb (+5)	Stardrive Repair System Alien Energy Shield
Great (+4)	Manoeuvre Beam Weapon Beam Weapon Crew Stations
Good (+3)	EWS Alien Reflective Armour Alien Ablative Armour FTL Inhibitor Targeting Computer
Fair (+2)	Plasma Weapon Mining Equipment Grappling System Plasma Weapon Salvage Equipment
Average(+1)	Flight Bay Flight Bay Flight Bay Cargo Hold Cargo Hold Exotic Weapon

Aspects

Choose up to 5 Aspects

Stunts

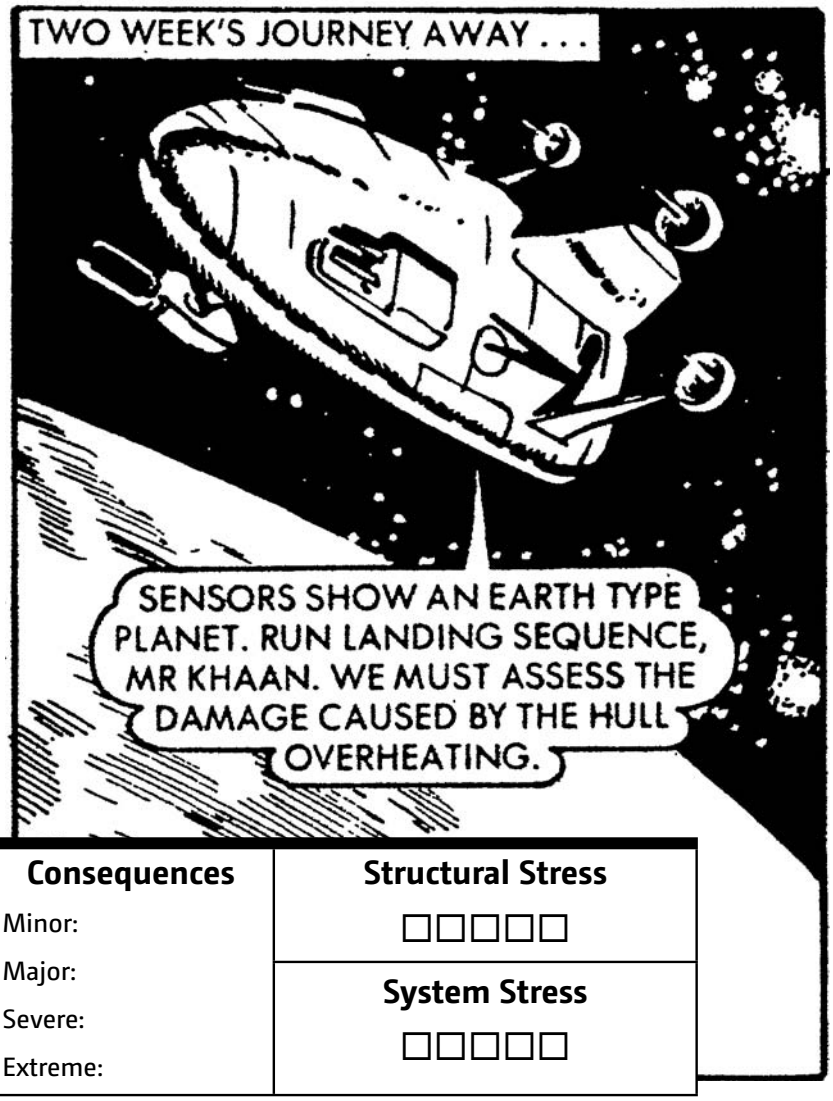
Auto Repair Salvage Alien Technology Research Computer Cloaking
Track FTL Radiation Protection Dangerous Cargo Containment

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
(#1) Minor:	Minor:
(#1) Major:	Major:
(#1) Severe:	Severe:
(#2) Minor:	Extreme:
(#2) Major:	
(#2) Severe:	

When you need a mysterious alien ship to threaten the players here's a good starting point. The Advanced Alien Cruiser carries a devastating Exotic Weapon as well as the Shroud Generator to make it hard to find. There's some serious defensive systems to absorb a lot of punishment and plenty of standard weapons to keep most enemies at bay. The Alien Cruise carries a compliment of a two hundred aliens, along with 2 fighters and a shuttle craft

THE MIGHTY DESTRUCTOR TOOK TO THE AIR

A massive intergalactic research ship that trawls the newly discovered star systems of the fringe researching new races and aliens found by explorers. The ship contains sophisticated research and analysis systems and a compliment of 75 crew, scientists, researchers and explorers. The flight bay carries a shuttlecraft. The ship is designed for long term voyages from 6 months to a year in space and features considerable space for living quarters, science labs and research facilities for the crew.


TWO WEEK'S JOURNEY AWAY . . .
SENSORS SHOW AN EARTH TYPE PLANET. RUN LANDING SEQUENCE, MR KHAAN. WE MUST ASSESS THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE HULL OVERHEATING.

Starship Type	**Consequences**	**Structural Stress**
Xenobiology Research Vessel	Minor:	☐☐☐☐☐
Scale	Major:	**System Stress**
Huge(5) Advanced Extended	Severe:	☐☐☐☐☐
	Extreme:	

Skills

Great (+4)	Ship Systems	Advanced Sensor Suite		
Good (+3)	Cargo Hold	Cargo Hold	Energy Shield	
Fair (+2)	Salvage System	Stardrive	Ablative Armour	Protected Crew
Average (+1)	Manoeuvre	Flight Bay	Grappling System	
	Repair System	Beam Weapon		

Aspects

Choose up to 5 Aspects

Stunts

Salvage Alien Technology Dangerous Cargo Containment Research Computer
Livestock Area

Consequences (Armour)	**Consequences (Shields)**
Minor:	Minor:
Major:	Major:
	Severe:

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Mining Ship	Minor: Major:	□□□□□
Scale	Severe: Extreme:	**System Stress**
Huge(5) Advanced		□□□□□

Skills

Great (+4)	Mining Equipment
Good (+3)	Cargo Hold Cargo Hold
Fair (+2)	Grappling System Energy Shield Advanced Sensor Suite
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre Ship Systems Flight Bay Ablative Armour

Aspects

Choose up to 5 Aspects

Stunts

Precision Mining Radiation Protection Dangerous Cargo Containment

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor:	Minor: Major:

The Mining ship is designed to explore asteroid belts looking for raw materials, dig them out and bring them home. It is run by a compliment of 50 crew and miners who operate robotic diggers which swarm around asteroids feeding resources to the mining ship's hold.

Scale 6

The enormous exploration ships is designed for missions lasting several years, cataloguing new star systems and looking for habitable worlds, investigating strange phenomena and making contact with new alien races. The ship has incredibly sophisticated sensors allowing it to detect the smallest clues and contains sophisticated research and analysis systems. The ship is run by a compliment of 100 crew, scientists and explorers. The flight bay carries a shuttlecraft and two Scouts.

Starship Type	**Consequences**	**Structural Stress**
Explorer Ship	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐☐☐
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Enormous(6)	Extreme:	☐☐☐☐☐

Skills

Superb (+5)	Advanced Sensor Suite			
Great (+4)	Ship Systems	Stardrive		
Good (+3)	Flight Bay	Mining System	Cargo Hold	
Fair (+2)	Energy Shield	Repair System	Grappling System	Ablative Armour
Average(+1)	Manoeuvre	Cargo Hold	Projectile Weapon	Beam Weapon

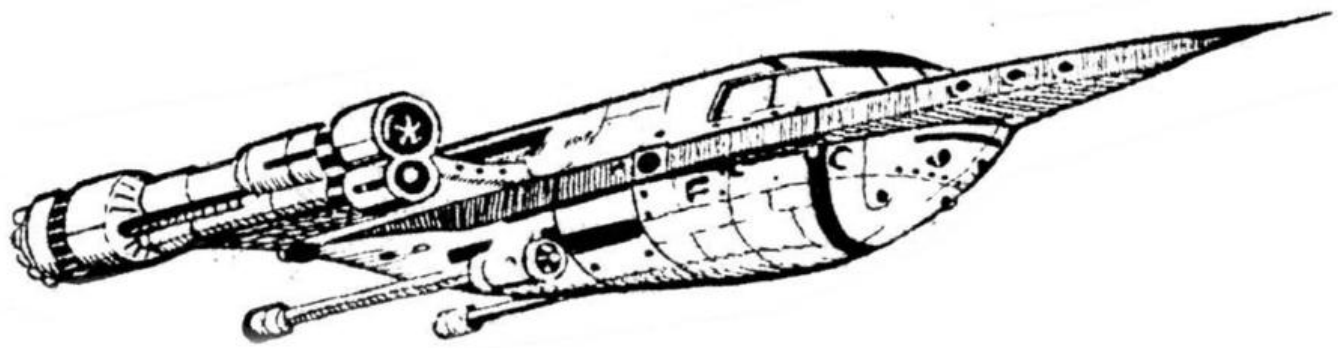
Aspects

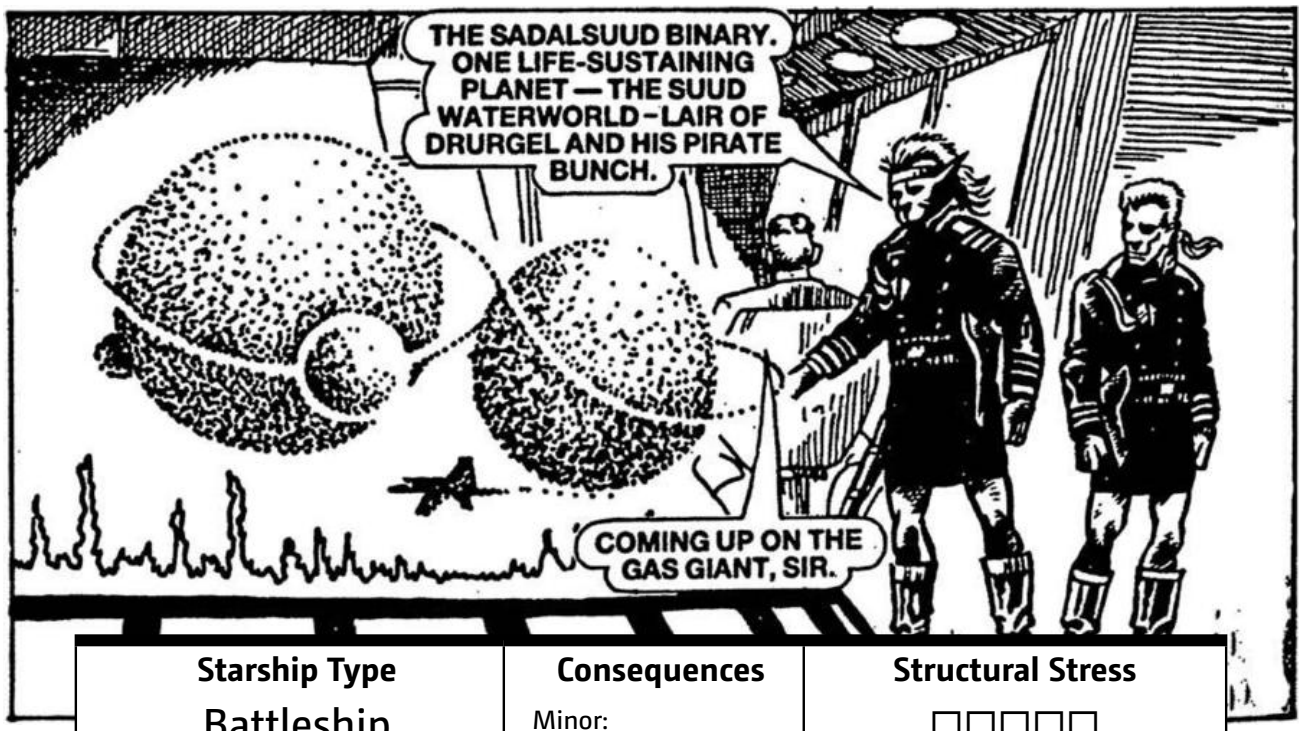
Choose up to 6 Aspects

Stunts

Research Computer Knowledge Base Sensor Probes Salvage

Consequences (Armour)	**Consequences (Shields)**
Minor:	Minor:
Major:	Major:




THE SADALSUUD BINARY. ONE LIFE-SUSTAINING PLANET — THE SUUD WATERWORLD – LAIR OF DRURGEL AND HIS PIRATE BUNCH.
COMING UP ON THE GAS GIANT, SIR.

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Battleship	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐☐☐
Scale	Severe: Extreme:	**System Stress**
Enormous(6) Advanced		☐☐☐☐☐

Skills

Superb (+5)	Ship Systems	Beam Weapon		
Great (+4)	Stardrive	Projectile Weapon	Plasma Weapon	
Good (+3)	Ablative Armour	Energy Shield	Torpedo Launcher	EWS
Fair (+2)	Projectile Weapon Flight Bay	Grappling System Repair System	Targeting Computer	
Average(+1)	Projectile Weapon Beam Weapon	Projectile Weapon Protected Crew Stations	Beam Weapon Manoeuvre	

Aspects

Choose up to 6 Aspects

Stunts

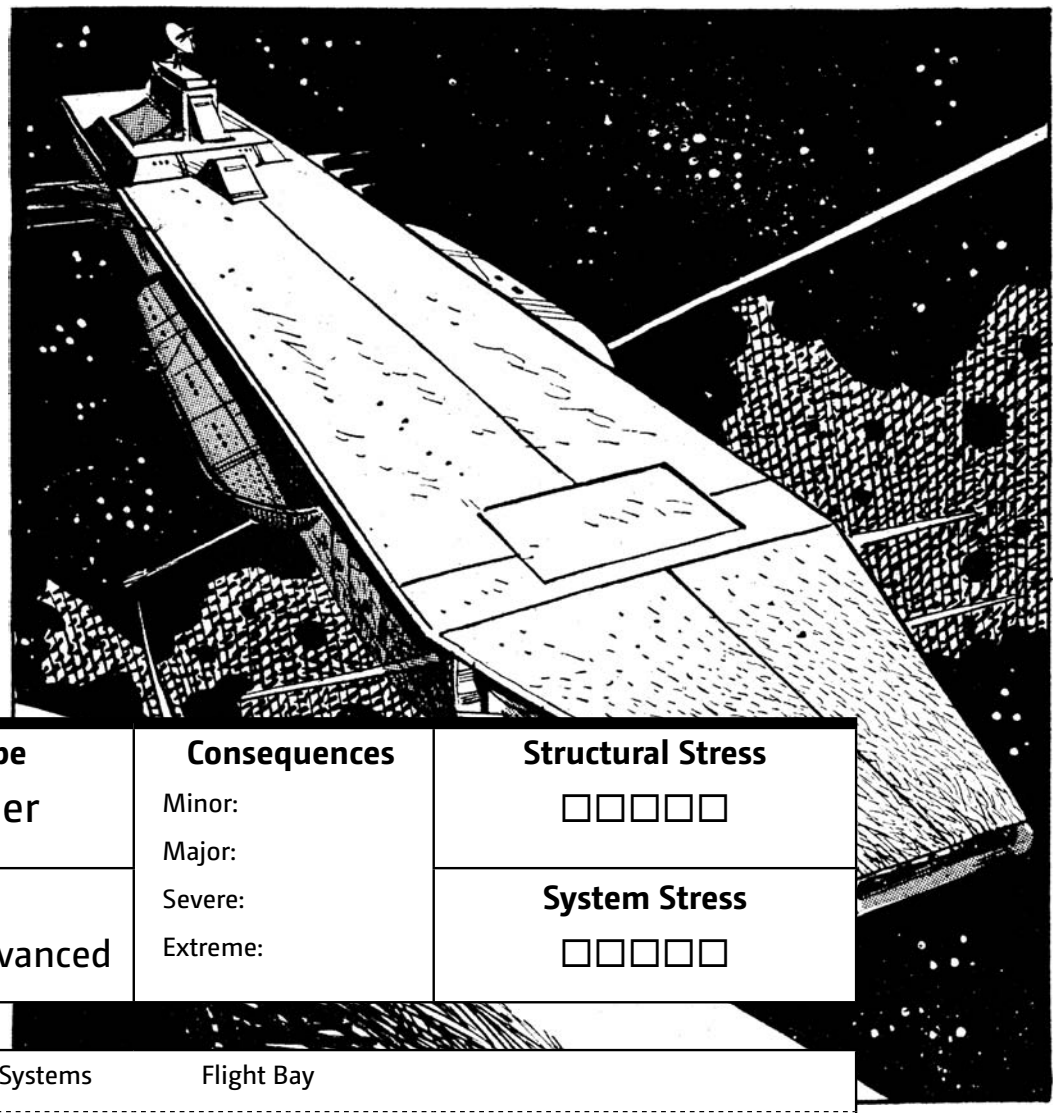
Torpedoes Away! Auto Repair Split Fire (Projectile) Point Defence (Projectile) Broadband Guidance Jamming

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor:	Minor:
Major:	Major:
Severe:	Severe:

The Battleship is the muscle of any fleet and would always be accompanied by smaller capital ships such as frigates and cruisers. It packs some serious firepower and is designed to take on giant space stations and other similar capital ships. The ship is run by a compliment of 200 officers and crew.

The Fleet Carrier is designed to support two squadrons of fighters and carries two shuttle craft. It is run by a compliment of 300 officers, crew and pilots.

The carrier can carry twice the number of fighters due to the Carrier Bays stunt which doubles Flight Bay capacity.



Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Fleet Carrier	Minor: Major:	□□□□□
Scale	Severe:	**System Stress**
Enormous(6) Advanced	Extreme:	□□□□□

Skills

Superb (+5)	Ship Systems	Flight Bay		
Great (+4)	Flight Bay	Flight Bay	EWS	
Good (+3)	Ablative Armour	Repair System	Energy Shield	Protected Crew
Fair (+2)	Hardened Structure	Reactor Shielding	Advanced Sensor Suite	
	Stardrive	Targeting Computer		
Average(+1)	Projectile Weapon	Projectile Weapon	Manoeuvre	
	Beam Weapon	Beam Weapon	Cargo Hold	

Aspects

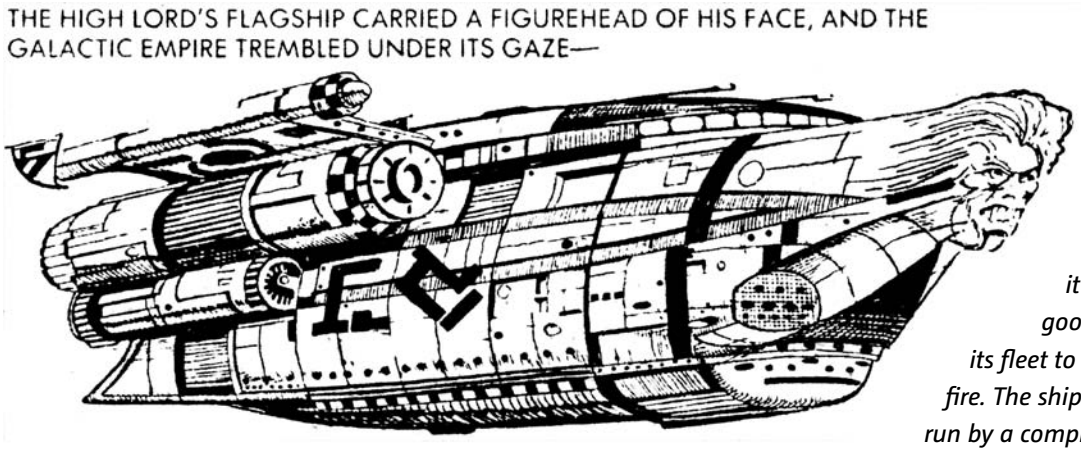
Choose up to 6 Aspects

Stunts

Quick Launch Carrier Bays Point Defence Auto Repair
Broadband Guidance Jamming

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor:	Minor:
Major:	Major:
Severe:	Severe:

Scale 7



The Command Cruiser is usually the flagship of a fleet. It's packed with firepower and sensors to keep an eye on both the enemy and it's own forces. Defences are good but the ship relies on its fleet to get in the way of enemy fire. The ship carries 4 shuttles and is run by a compliment of 350 officers and crew many of whom are staff in the fleet command centre.

Starship Type	**Consequences**	**Structural Stress**
Command Cruiser (Fleet Level Only)	Minor: Major: Severe: Extreme:	☐☐☐☐☐
Scale		**System Stress**
Colossal(7)		☐☐☐☐☐

Skills

Fantastic (+6)	Ship Systems		
Superb (+5)	Beam Weapon	Plasma Weapon	
Great (+4)	Beam Weapon	Advanced Sensor Suite	EWS
Good (+3)	Ablative Armour Repair System	Targeting Computer	Energy Shield
Fair (+2)	Flight Bay Flight Bay	Grappling System Beam Weapon	Stardrive
Average(+1)	Beam Weapon Beam Weapon	Projectile Weapon Projectile Weapon	Projectile Weapon Manoeuvre

Aspects

Choose up to 7 Aspects

Stunts

Enhanced Comms Track FTL Show Your Better Side Auto Repair
Reactor Shielding Point Defence (Projectile)

Consequences (Armour)	**Consequences (Shields)**
Minor:	Minor:
Major:	Major:
Severe:	Severe:

Spacestations

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Typical Space Station	Minor: Major:	☐☐☐☐☐
Scale	Severe: Extreme:	**System Stress**
Enormous(6)		☐☐☐☐☐

Skills

Superb (+5)	Ship Systems
Great (+4)	Cargo Hold Cargo Hold
Good (+3)	Energy Shield Flight Bay Repair System
Fair (+2)	Salvage System Grappling System Targeting Computer Advanced Sensor Suite
Average(+1)	Beam Weapon Projectile Weapon Flight Bay EWS Ablative Armour

Aspects

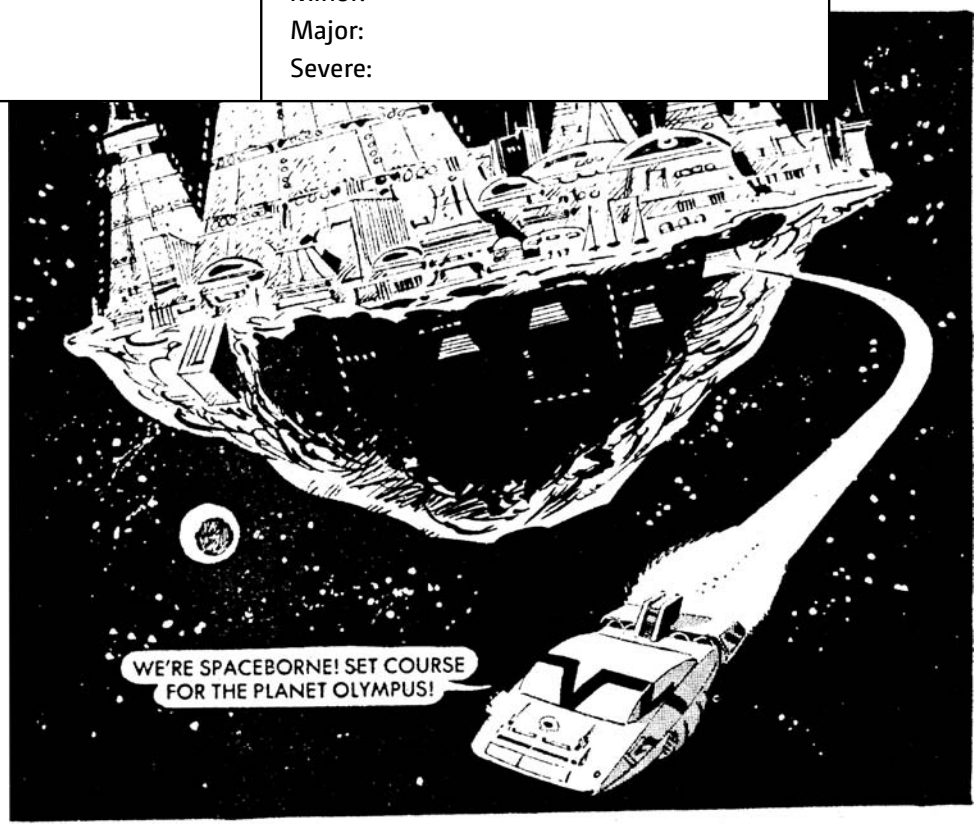
Choose up to 6 Aspects

Stunts

Quick Launch Carrier Bays Point Defence Auto Repair Broadband Guidance Jamming

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor:	Minor: Major: Severe:

This is your typical space station – scale down for back water planetary systems, and scale up for massive passenger hubs. The space station is manned by a crew of 100 and has living quarters for a further 100 travellers awaiting transport and waiting and recreation areas for a further 300 'just passing through'. The station has two shuttles for the use of its crew and is usually serviced by any number of shuttles from surrounding ships and planets and has docking facilities for numerous ships of all sizes.



A vast floating military base with enough firepower and a squadron of 12 fighters to protect itself. The station is manned by a crew of 350 and has two shuttles.

Starship Type	Consequences	Structural Stress
Orbital Military Base	Minor: Major: Severe: Extreme:	□□□□ □□□□
Scale		**System Stress**
Colossal(7)		□□□□□

Skills

Fantastic (+6)	Ship Systems
Superb (+5)	Beam Weapon Plasma Weapon
Great (+4)	Flight Bay Flight Bay Flight Bay
Good (+3)	Energy Shield Hardened Structure Reflective Armour Protected Crew Stations
Fair (+2)	Cargo Hold Flight Bay Repair System EWS Advanced Sensor Suite
Average (+1)	Projectile Weapon Beam Weapon Targeting Computer Projectile Weapon Beam Weapon Torpedo Launcher

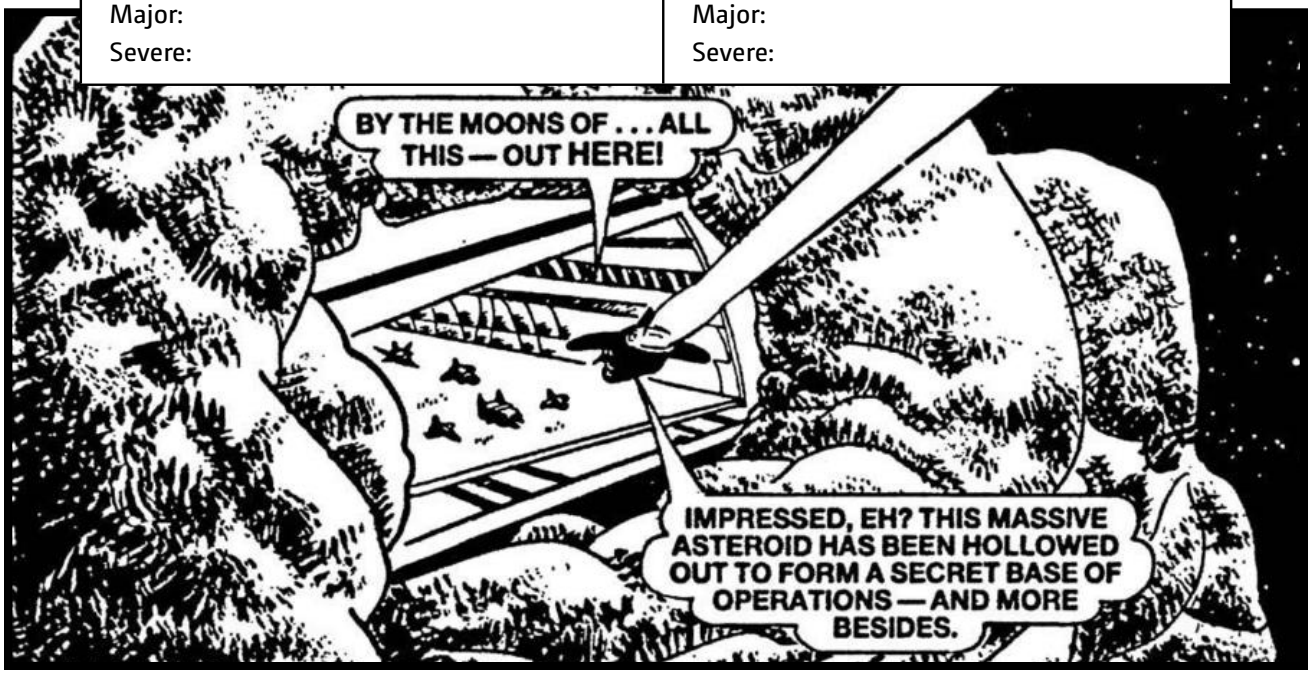
Aspects

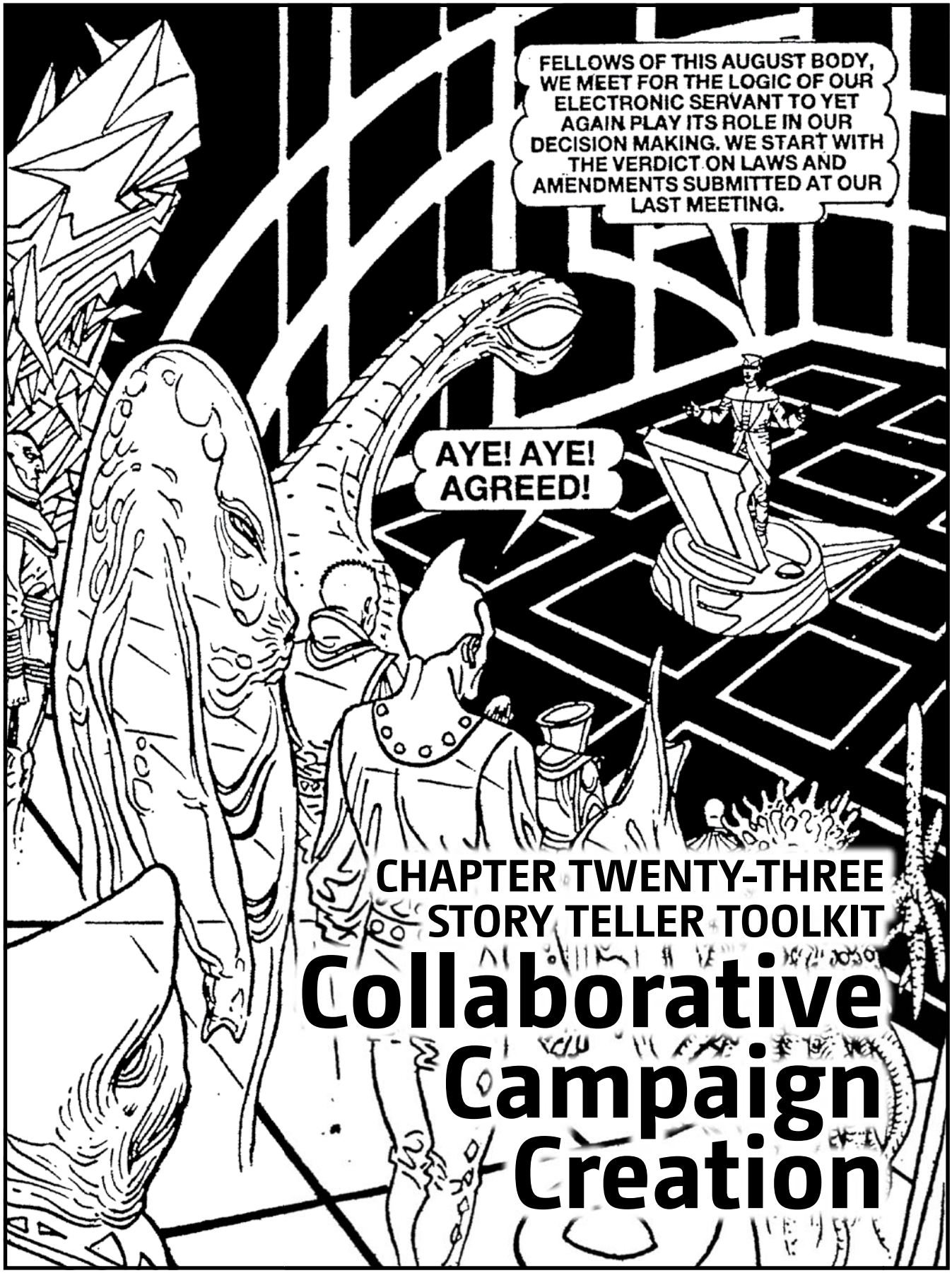
Choose up to 7 Aspects

Stunts

Advanced Med-bay Quick Launch Auto-Loader Point Defence (beam) Repair Drones Broadband Guidance Jamming

Consequences (Armour)	Consequences (Shields)
Minor:	Minor:
Major:	Major:
Severe:	Severe:


BY THE MOONS OF . . . ALL THIS — OUT HERE!
IMPRESSED, EH? THIS MASSIVE ASTEROID HAS BEEN HOLLOWED OUT TO FORM A SECRET BASE OF OPERATIONS — AND MORE BESIDES.


FELLOWS OF THIS AUGUST BODY, WE MEET FOR THE LOGIC OF OUR ELECTRONIC SERVANT TO YET AGAIN PLAY ITS ROLE IN OUR DECISION MAKING. WE START WITH THE VERDICT ON LAWS AND AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AT OUR LAST MEETING.
AYE! AYE! AGREED!

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE
STORY TELLER TOOLKIT

Collaborative Campaign Creation

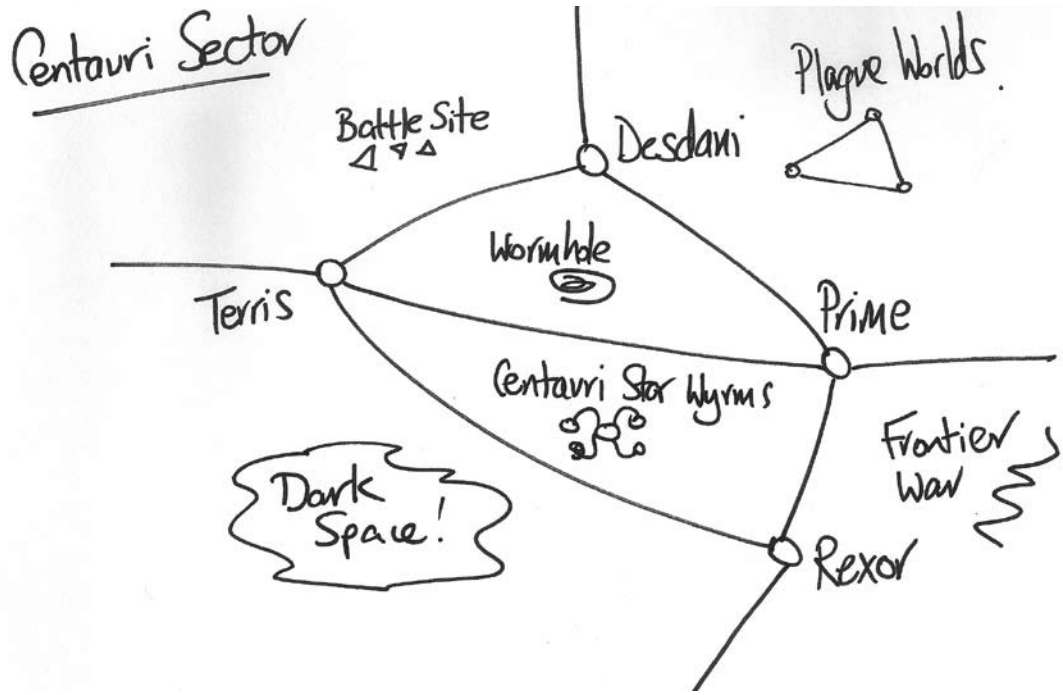
Collaborative Campaign Creation

One way of ensuring your campaign contains features that you know your players want is to use a collaborative campaign building session. A Story Teller can provide the basis of their campaign for this or work with the players to create the whole campaign.

It's pretty easy and fun to do – just follow these steps. Let's assume you want to start from scratch;

- Take a piece of paper and each player draws a small circle somewhere on the paper. These will be places of interest – on a galactic scale they could be important star systems or worlds, on a planetary scale they could be towns or star ports on a city scale they could be buildings.
- Each player then draws a line from one circle to the edge of the paper – it can be curved or straight. Each player must pick a different circle than the one they drew. This is to create different spaces on the map
- Now take it in turns to draw a curved or straight line from one circle to another until all circles are connected to two other circles
- This should give you a campaign map with for example several star systems (the circles) and several sectors of spaces broken up by the lines you have drawn.
- Each player then takes it in turn to name a star system, and decide on an aspect of that star system such as 'unruly rebellious colony', 'ruled with an iron fist', 'full of earthly delights', 'hot bed of intrigue'. Ask the players to elaborate and take notes.
- Each player then adds a 'point of interest' to a sector of space. For example, 'wormhole', 'star about to go nova', 'ships go missing here', 'ancient ringworld', 'battleground from the fifth war', 'star creatures cluster around an unusual sun'. Briefly ask the players to describe what is it they imagine this to be. You could add an aspect to each of these points of interest too.
- An astute Story Teller should realise that the players are giving you vital clues as to the kind of campaign or story they'd like to experience. Do they want explorations of ancient alien places, alien invasions, rebellious pirates, intrigue and mystery. What kind of places do they want to visit? Wait, they just told you!

So there's two ways you can use this, establish a few of the places on the campaign map and let them help you fill in the gaps, you could even draw the map and just let the players add the content. Alternatively let the players feed you ideas, write notes and work out your campaign based on that. Either way, it's a great deal of fun, engaging, and helps bring the players together so they have a vested interest in exploring the worlds they just came up with.



Now if you want to go in to even more detail, change the scale and do the same thing for a solar system, perhaps the one where you're going to spend the most time, or even a planet, a continent, a country, even a city. Basically let the players point out areas of interest, come up with aspects describing them and there you have it, you're first collaborative campaign.

The best way to manage this is just to focus in on the places the players want to – do they all get excited about Jane's idea of an old abandoned city on the jungle world? Ok focus in on the area around the city and let them point out aspects or points of interest. Did Adam's aspect 'dregs of space' describing the battered old space station interest everyone and get them talking? Okay let everyone describe a part of the station and go in to more detail. Remember you've got to balance what everyone wants, don't construct your campaign around someone one person likes when it was clear the others weren't so keen.

Creating a campaign area like characters...

Alternatively you could create the campaign area just like characters. Whether it's a universe with several Star Empires, a Sector with various star systems, a world with various governments or organisations it can all be managed by the Fate organisation creation system as follows.

For example imagine creating your own setting by having each player own a part of it and creating the Five galactic empires 'just like characters', running through the phased process, giving the empires 'guest starring' moments where they interact with other cultures, putting Aspects on them, adding Skills to represent the empire's abilities or weaknesses.

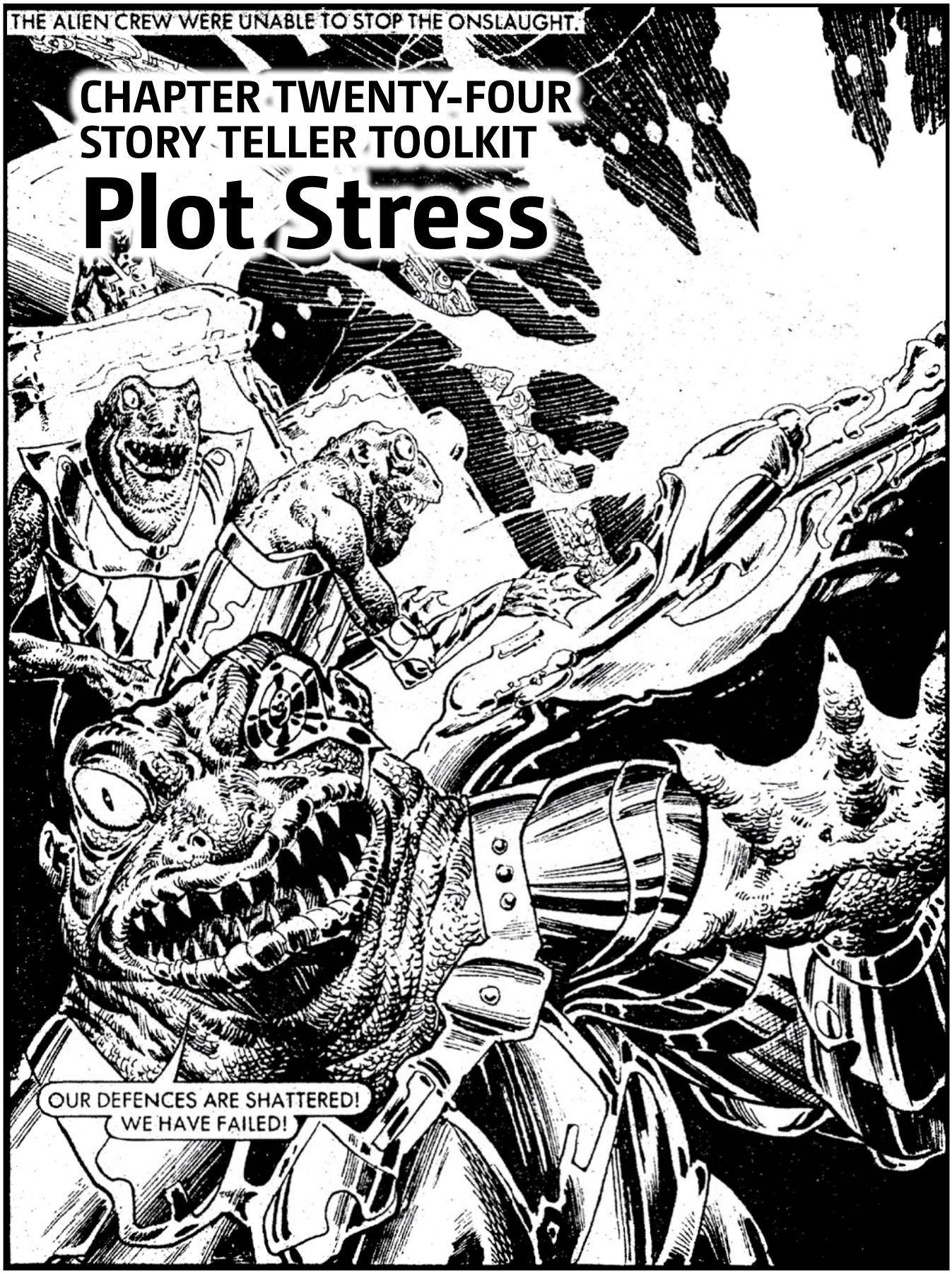
Then you zoom in to get a closer look, did someone come up with an empire that everyone liked? Okay let's look at that Empire and everyone now generates a star system, or a world each once again complete with Aspects and Skills. One player grabs New Moscow and slaps a 'Ruled with an iron fist' Aspect on it at one point. Bam, instant locale for the game they're about to run.

Then you zoom in again and do exactly the same thing with the major organisations of New Moscow, and finally down to the neighbourhoods of it's capital city if you want.

Just like a fractal, Fate is made up of a bunch of different pieces that all resemble one another. Pick one section and zoom in, and you'll see something entirely different -- and yet very familiar, the smaller part having patterns that resemble the greater whole.

We don't just have wars at this level, intrigue and political machinations are also a small but crucial element of Starblazer. Imagine Emissaries & diplomats in conflict over trade agreements and land rights, galactic spies, two-faced ambassadors, collapsing empires, multi-species parliaments, Great Houses, shocking conspiracies, traitorous leaders, it's all there.

See the chapter on Creating & Running Organisations & Star Empires for organisation skill lists and how to play them within Starblazer Adventures.


THE ALIEN CREW WERE UNABLE TO STOP THE ONSLAUGHT.
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR
STORY TELLER TOOLKIT
Plot Stress
OUR DEFENCES ARE SHATTERED!
WE HAVE FAILED!

Campaign, Group & Character Plot Stress

You can choose to make the players lives a little more complicated and interesting at the same time by having Campaign, Group and Character Plot stress. Essentially each one is a stress track that is affected by player character failures, specific player actions and trying to escape death. As the stress damage builds up various "plot events" happen which lead to change in the characters lives or experiences.

Campaign Stress

To give you an idea let's take an example of Campaign Stress.

Spacestation Theta 9

Spacestation Theta 9 was established after the second Terran War devastated the ability for nearby star systems to protect themselves from pirates and invaders. The purpose of the station is to support a fleet of Star Patrol craft that patrol nearby space and protect the colonies.

The players arrive at the station and begin their secret mission to find evidence of a traitorous Star Patrol officer, who is rumoured to be selling the local colonies out to the pirates. The Story Teller has determined a Stress Track and Consequences for the Campaign as follows:

Campaign Stress Track

The stress track is staged – as each full line of stress boxes are crossed off it causes a consequence in the campaign plot, starting from the bottom.

Extreme! ☐☐☐☐☐
Severe! ☐☐☐☐
Major! ☐☐☐
Minor! ☐☐

Minor Consequence: Power failure in space station—Energy Shields fail

Major Consequence: Pirates attack the Station in force

Severe Consequence: Player characters are accused of treachery

Extreme Consequence: Pirates board the station and set the station's fusion reactor to explode

Players will inflict stress on the Campaign stress track by doing the following:

- Each free tag of an Organisation, Location or Adventure aspect causes one point of stress.
- If the players start a fire fight in the space station it causes 2 stress
- Each player action which alerts the traitor to their secret mission causes 2 points of stress.
- Each time the players use violence or the threat of violence to subdue an Extra causes a point of stress.
- Each conflict with a pirate ship or group of pirates on land or aboard a ship inflicts 1 stress
- Each action which alerts the crew or commanders of the Star Patrol station to the traitor causes 2 stress
- Each time a player wants to reduce a Taken Out result to an Extreme consequence on themselves or another character they inflict 2 stress.

Note that none of the above is revealed to the players but serves as a tool for the Story Teller to drive the narrative or campaign forward.

Creating The Stress Track

It's very much up to the Story Teller to decide how much can happen before the finale to the campaign – i.e. how long the stress track is, what kind of events will trigger the plot consequences and how much damage they will do to the plot stress track. Use the above examples as a guide – generally options should inflict one stress unless they are directly involved in the story or bending the rules to keep the characters alive (barely), in which case they should inflict 2 stress. The simplest way is to add up all the encounters you have planned for the campaign and equate that to campaign stress. So if you think there will be 7 encounters in the story, that's a stress track with 7 boxes to tick off.

Taking Stress and Consequences

The Story Teller should cross-off Campaign Plot Stress as it is caused. Players should have the option to cross off group and character plot stress. The Story Teller is not obliged to tell them what is causing them to cross it off but if they're astute they should be able to figure it out. Whoever is responsible for crossing off the Stress is also responsible for deciding when to take a Consequence to reduce the amount of Stress crossed off and incurring the stated events of the Consequence. Taking a Consequence refreshes the stated number of Stress boxes, not only absorb the incoming Stress.

Organisation, Group and Character Stress

You can define a plot stress track with the players for their organisation, group or for each character. These plot stress tracks take 10 stress and you can take consequences to reduce plot stress, which instigate key plot events. Consequences absorb just as much stress as in social and physical conflict, i.e. minor -2, major -4, severe -6, extreme -8 stress.

For example let's imagine the players are commanders in the Earth Defence Fleet. They have 10 plot stress and devise the following consequences that will have an impact on their story.

Stress Track

□□□□□ □□□□□

Minor Consequence: A traitor is placed amongst the fleet

Major Consequence: The carrier is heavily damaged by a bomb and the fleet will be without adequate fighter cover for some time

Severe Consequence: The fleet loses its fuel source and orbital shipyard in a battle—the commanders must consider carefully any fleet movement to spare the reserves. Damaged ships will take longer to repair whilst Severe or greater consequences cannot be repaired at all.

Extreme Consequence: The fleet is surprised and defeated in a battle. Barely a fraction makes it back to Earth, and even those are mostly damaged beyond repair. The situation is desperate!

Generally speaking a minor consequence should be something that could be dealt with one on one by the players, but could potentially have more far reaching effects. A major consequence should have a partially disabling effect, a severe consequence a more disabling effect and an extreme consequence should be all but defeat, though with just enough room for the players to make a difference.

As with Campaign stress the Story Teller should define a number of actions that will inflict stress. For example, taking the Earth Defence Fleet above:

- Each reduction of a Consequence level (e.g. from Extreme to Severe) on a player controlled ship or character inflicts 2 stress
- Each fleet combat inflicts 1 stress
- Each -5 rolled inflicts 1 stress
- Each failure of an Earth Defence Fleet organisation Security skill or Arms skill check inflicts 1 stress
- Each free tag of a location Aspect by the Earth Defence Fleet or each compel of the Earth Defence fleet's Aspects inflicts 1 stress

In the same way you can define a Group or Character plot stress track but with smaller scale consequences such as the failure of their ship's engine and the need to land for repairs, getting in trouble with the local pirates or underworld, losing a hand, discovering your own dark secret, your loved one being kidnapped or getting on the wrong side of the law. Just as collaborative campaign development helps the Story Teller understand more about what themes the players want from their game, the consequences that the players come up with should be a guide to the kind of plot action they want to see too.

But that's not all...

There is a bonus for taking Organisation, Group and Character plot consequences; each player gets to refresh their Fate points as if a new session had just started. You just know something bad is going to happen, right?

Well the other thing that should happen is those subject to the consequences should consider changing an Aspect to reflect the impact of the plot consequence on their lives.

For example a character that takes a major personal plot consequence and discovers his wife has married another, thinking him dead after his years shipwrecked on the alien world should change his "Brave Star Patrol Officer" career aspect to "Star Patrol cost me my marriage". Although it has turned in to a negative aspect (that an enemy could tag to goad him) it's still beneficial in that the player will earn Fate points for its effect on his character.

Which Plot Stress

You may feel one or more of these are appropriate – we recommend you pick one, not all three styles of plot stress depending on what you and the players feel is right for your game. Otherwise there's too much record keeping involved – game play should flow smoothly without too much admin like this.

In general, for most people having this kind of 'metaplot' for the character or the group or organisation that they have an invested interest in, it does a better job of defining what that entity means to them than a set of descriptive aspects alone does, and even goes a long way in helping them come up with those aspects for their characters in the first place.

Healing?

Plot stress doesn't clear out at the end of a scene or a session, it just keeps going. It's a dwindling resource that is lost over the course of an entire story, putting pressure towards the endgame on having to choose--do you allow things to fall apart, circumstances turning even more dire, or do you go down in a hail of bullets for the good of all?

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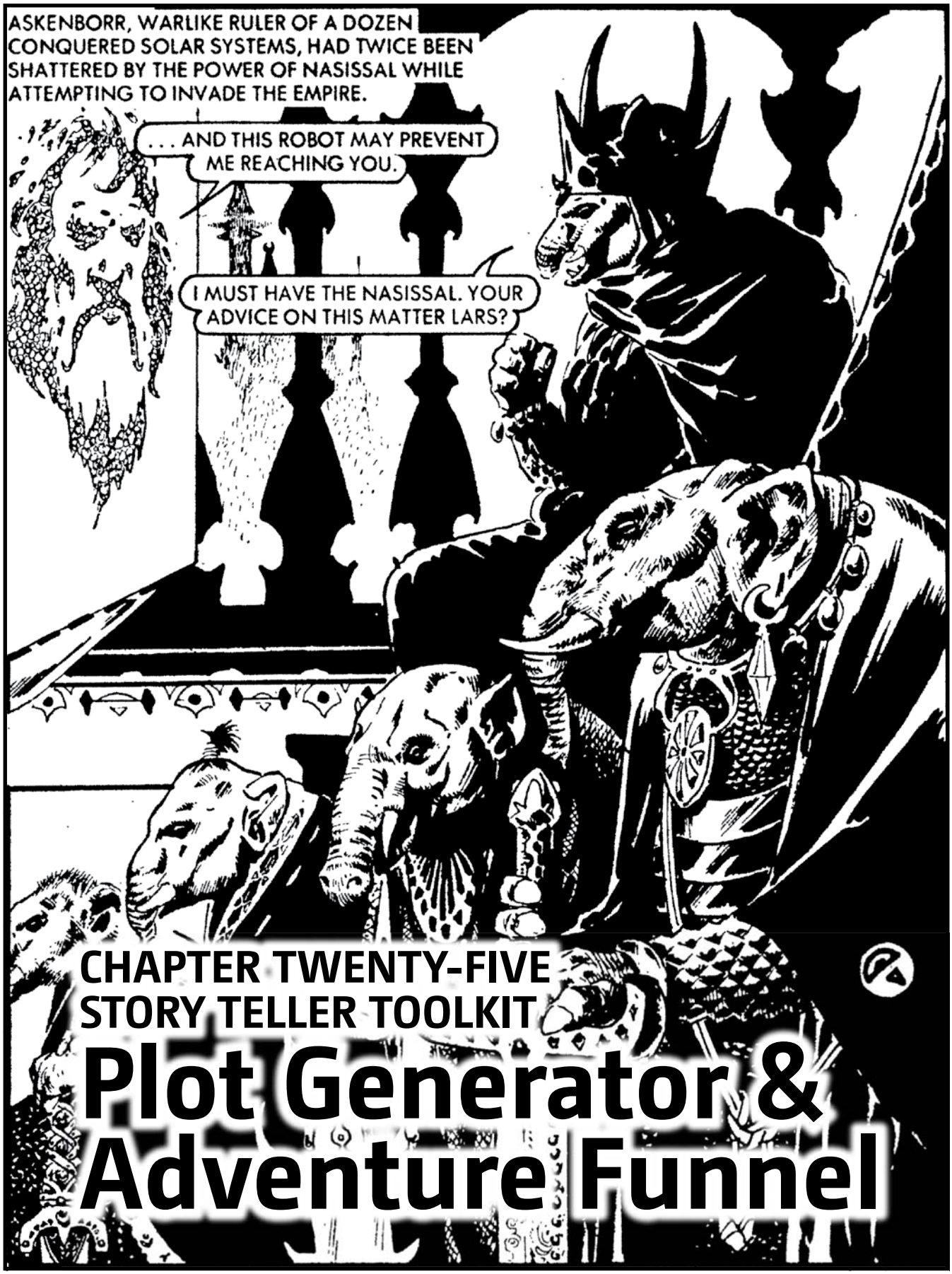
ASKENBORR, WARLIKE RULER OF A DOZEN CONQUERED SOLAR SYSTEMS, HAD TWICE BEEN SHATTERED BY THE POWER OF NASISSAL WHILE ATTEMPTING TO INVADE THE EMPIRE.
. . . AND THIS ROBOT MAY PREVENT ME REACHING YOU.
I MUST HAVE THE NASISSAL. YOUR ADVICE ON THIS MATTER LARS?

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE
STORY TELLER TOOLKIT

Plot Generator & Adventure Funnel

Constructing A Starblazer Legend

Story Tellers will usually design and write their own campaigns, but occasionally a "script" or *Starblazer Legend* as we call them is needed in a hurry, usually as the party goes off at a tangent, digging themselves a hole much deeper than the one carefully prepared for them by the Story Teller (or the Story Teller is too hung-over to come up with something!). This chapter offers three methods that can be used to aid creating these Legends and will also aid fast generation of a Legend for those in a hurry. It can aid creation of anything from a simple encounter to providing components that together could be used to create a mission or part of a campaign. The first method is a series of plot generator tables, the second is the Starblazer Legends chapter, the third is Andrew "Dr Rotwang!" Reyes' Adventure Funnel.

Random Generator Tables

With the following tables you can easily construct the outline of a Starblazer Legend. You could either use this whilst you come up with the adventure yourself or to prompt discussion and assist with the Collaborative Campaign system.

- Pick the nature of the mission (Table 1)
- Pick a mission objective (Table 2 tells you which other table to then look at based on the nature of the mission)
- Pick a complication (Table 10)
- Pick who is trying to stop the characters completing their mission (Table 12)
- Pick who their leader is (Table 3b)
- Pick a reason why they are trying to stop the mission (Table 11)
- If you wish, pick locations for the mission objective, location of the bad guys headquarters, locations of key scenes or encounters from Tables 4a-4f. These provide various different planetary and space based locales.
- Use the Tables 3a-3e to devise quick encounters and then locations from Table 4.

All the tables have random number keys allowing you to make random selections for any or all of them.

Some tables can be combined to enhance detail, but obviously some of the combinations these tables can generate will be impractical—just re-roll or re-pick any that are not sensible (or come up with something inventive that makes sense of it! - the funnier the better). Some tables will overlap.

There will inevitably be things we have missed out; these tables are intended as a source of inspiration and "quick fixes" rather than definitive lists - there are too many entries to include here to do that, so as always, if you want (say) an Egyptian Bazaar, use one. The fact that it is not listed here does not matter.

Table 1 - Nature of Mission (1D6)

Roll	Nature	Description
1	**Personal**	mission refers an individual or handful of individuals
2	**Corporate**	mission concerns a company, corporation, or organisation
3	**Military**	mission involves an armed service, covers land, sea, air & space
4	**Item / Object**	mission is about a special item
5	**Knowledge**	mission concerns information rather than something physical
6	**Diplomatic**	mission is about settling something between two factions

Table 2 - Mission Objectives

Mission	Use Tables
Personal	Generic Encounters (3c), Good Guys (3a), or Bad Guys (3b)
Corporate	Corporate Objectives (7)
Military	Military Objectives (8)
Item	Random Key Items (5)
Knowledge	Random Key Information (6)
Diplomatic	Diplomatic Objective (9)

[*Chapter 25: Plot Generator & The Adventure Funnel*]▷

Encounters

Table 3a - Good Guy Encounters / Target of Objective [Personal Missions] (2D6)

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column.

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Law Lord	Reluctant Hero	Local Hero	Holy Man	Monk	Wealthy Benefactor
2 - 3	Medic	Space Patrol Soldier	Law Enforcement Officer	Enemy of My Enemy	Fire Fighter	Military Soldier / Sailor / Trooper
4 - 5	Friend	Doctor	Judge	Militia Volunteer	Aid Worker	Vigilante
6	Undercover Operative	Military Officer	Unexpected Ally	Helpful Official	Law Enforcement Robot	Space Patrol Officer

Table 3b - Bad Guy Encounters / Target of Objective [Personal Missions] (2D6)

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Bounty Hunter	Creative Accountant	Rogue Technomage	Pirate	Assassin	Monster
2	Crime Boss	Traitorous Friend	Anarchist	Confidence Trickster	Hostile Alien	Big Monster
3	Alien Agent	Smuggler	Mobster	Estate Agent	Local Thug	Really Big Monster
4	Murderer	Renegade Mutant	Corrupt Bureaucrat / Official	Thief	Corrupt Official	Mad Scientist
5	Corrupt Military Officer	Rampaging Robot	Sinister Death Lord	Corrupt Soldier / Sailor / Trooper	Religious Zealot	Traitorous Politician
6	Lawyer	Mercenary	Serial Killer	Career Criminal	War Criminal	Alien Shape-changer

◁[*Chapter 25: Plot Generator & The Adventure Funnel*]

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THEY DIDN'T HAVE LONG TO WAIT—
I HAVE A SHIP APPROACHING ON OUR SCANNERS! THE FEDERAL REGISTER SAYS IT BELONGS TO THE LAW ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT!
LOCK ON AND DESTROY! IT MUST BE THAT MANDROID!

Table 3c - Generic Encounters / Target of Objective [Personal Missions] (2D6)

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Alien Leader	Law Enforcement Officer	Pirate	Military Officer	Robot	Merchant / Trader
2	Political Leader	Engineer	Android	Heir / Heiress	Xenobiologist	Military Soldier / Sailor / Trooper
3	Biologist	Chemist	Crime Boss	Politician	Alien	Corporate Executive
4	V.I.P.	Pirate Captain	Sports Star	Criminal	Smuggler	Bounty Hunter
5	Celebrity	Research Scientist	Archaeologist	Prince / Princess	Doctor	Undercover Operative
6	Mutant	Witness	Journalist	Starship Captain	Civilian	Physicist

[*Chapter 25: Plot Generator & The Adventure Funnel*]▷

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Table 3d - Space Encounters

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Random Location*	Alien Probe	Sargasso Starfield	Space Battle	Starship Marie Celeste	Random Location*
2	Hostile Fleet	Ion Storm	Rogue Comet	Solar Flare	Pulsar	Law Enforcement Ship / Fleet
3	Ancient Starship Trap	Radiation Storm	Alien Cruiser	Random Location*	Space Borne Rust Mites	Coronal Mass Ejection (CME)
4	Black Hole	Asteroid Field	Debris Field	Drawn (Ship eater, page 565)	Lost Explorer Ship	Space Battle Remnants (wreckage)
5	Magnetar	Meteor	Escaped Prisoners	Malevolent Star Relic	Minefield	Plague Ship
6	Random Location*	Cosmic Storm	Giant Space Creature	Pirate Ship / Fleet	Unstable Wormhole	Random Location*

* Random locations are rolled on the Space-Structures table (Table 4e).

Table 3e - Star Relics

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-3	Dyson Sphere	Solar Tug	Sun Cluster	Planetary Matter Converter	Intergalactic Comms Network	Ancient Stellar City Sphere
4-6	Solar Light-house	Crystal Star Palace	World Cluster	Intergalactic Transport System	Vault of Heaven	Ringworld

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Table 3f - Alien Relics

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1-3	Library World	Ancient Storage Depot	Hollow Planet	Trans-dimensional Gateway	Mega Cruiser	Ancient Alien Weapons Cache
4-6	Mega Carrier	Intergalactic Doorways	Factory World	War World	Trans-dimensional Super Weapon	Planet Sized Spacestation

Locations

These represent typically interesting locations found in the four environments the party is likely to be operating in. Space has been split into two sections representing areas of space and things found in space.

Table 4 - Random Locations (D6)

If you would like a random location, use this table to work out what type of location the characters come across, need to travel to or the target / objective is to be found at.

Then roll on the appropriate table below or simply use these tables when the players are in the appropriate places to see what they come across next.

Roll	Location
1	**Ground**
2	**Building**
3	**Sea**
4	**Orbital**
5	**Space**
6	**Space-Structure**

Table 4a - Locations (Ground)

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Polar Ice Cap	River	Desert (Rock)	Shipyard	Crystal Fields	Artificial Cavern
2	Swamp	Coastline	Desert (Sand)	Bar / Hostelry	Tundra	Rift Valley / Canyon
3	Lakes	Jungle	City	Mineral Mine	Rare Metal Mine	Crystal Mine
4	Cave System	Rain Forest	Field Network	Hills	Delta	Modern Battlefield
5	Peat Bog	Ice Sheets	Snowfields	Planetary Region	Town / Village	Lunar Surface
6	Forest	Mud Flats	Old Battlefield	Remote Settlement	Mountains	Metropolis

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Table 4b - Locations (Buildings)

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Monastery	Research Lab	Organisation Headquarters	Zoo	Army Base	Regional Headquarters
2	Prison	Airport	Fortress / Castle	Military Air Base	Refinery	Chemical Plant
3	Casino	Royal Palace	Great Library	Centre of Government	Government Building	Law Enforcement Facility
4	Hospital	Civilian Building	Military Research Base	Major Base / Installation	Supply Base	Underground Facility
5	Factory	Shopping Centre	Stock Exchange	School	Church / Temple	Military Starport
6	Museum	Organisation Holding	Atmospheric Dome	Starport	University	Ancient Ruins

Table 4c - Locations (Sea)

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Submerged Archaeological Site	Deep Sea Ridge	Underwater City	Wreck (Submerged)	Submerged Secret Base	Deep Sea Research Platform
2 - 3	Coastal Region	Super Tanker	Major Cargo Vessel	Submerged Installation	Obscure Island	Major Military Vessel
4 - 5	Floating City	Ocean Liner	Open Water	Coral Reef	Port	Oil Rig
6	Underwater Military Installation	Underwater Mine	Underwater Caverns	Wreck (Surface)	Deep Sea Trench	Deep Sea Submarine Base

Table 4d - Locations (Orbital) (D6)

Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6
Location	Orbital Defence Platform	Orbital Factory	Orbital Hydroponics Farm	Orbital Research Lab	Orbital Shipyard	Orbital Space Station

◁[*Chapter 25: Plot Generator & The Adventure Funnel*]

Table 4e - Locations (Space)

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Magnetar	Wormhole (natural)	Solar System (Giant / Supergiant)	Stray Moon (no planet)	Ancient Battle Site	Planet (Barren World)
2	Neutron Star	Nebula	Interstellar Space	Solar System (White Dwarf)	Sargasso Starfield (lost ships)	Planet (Desert World)
3	Gas Cloud	Asteroid Field	Interstellar Scrapyard	Solar System (Forming - Accretion Disk)	Quarantined Planet	Planet (Dwarf Planet)
4	Natural Wormhole	Intergalactic Space	Pulsar	Solar System (Main Sequence)	Planetary Moon	Planet (Gas Giant)
5	Black Hole	Prison Planet	Spatial Anomaly	Solar System (Multiple Stars)	Planet (Water World)	Planet (Ice World)
6	Wormhole (Gateway)	Oort Cloud	Void in Space	Solar System (Red Giant)	Planet (Volcanic World)	Planet (Jungle World)

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Table 4f - Locations (Space - Structures)

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Explorer Ship	Abandoned hulk	Trading Station	Medical Research Station	Interstellar Space Station	Deep Space Listening Post
2	Scientific Research Station	Space Liner	Warp Gate	Star Relic	Hydroponics Farm	Deep Space Telescope Array
3	Resupply Station	Hostile Fleet	Moonbase	Asteroid Mining Colony	Alien Outpost / Base	Deep Space Comms Relay
4	Asteroid Base	Colony Ship	Ghost Ship	Military Capitol Ship	High Security Interstellar Prison	Deep Space Monastery
5	Deserted Space Station	Military Fleet	Military Space Station	Comet Base	Interstellar Rescue Base	Deep Space Training Base
6	Pirate / Rebel Base	Fighter Base	Space Dock / Shipyard	Star Fort	Military Research & Development Station	Abandoned Alien Starbase

Table 5 - Random Key Items / Target of Objective [Item Missions]

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Ancient Issue of Starblazer	Dimensional Key	Urgent Medical Shipment	Valuable Statue	Rare Plant / Flower	Miniature Super Computer
2	Computer Virus Datachip	A Key (to what...?)	Data Chip / Crystal	Life Expanding Drug Prototype	Non-intel-ligent Alien Lifeform	Cargo of Radioactive Ore
3	Dangerous Lifeform	Mystical Artefact	Technology Prototype	Prototype Starship Component	Cache of Rare Coins	Consignment of Illegal Narcotics
4	Banned Book	Superweapon Component	Rare Jewel	Human Artefact	Religious Icon	Trans-dimen-sional Object
5	DNA sample	Family Heirloom	Prototype Weapon	Alien Artefact	Rare Endan-gered Creature	Vaccine for a Rare Disease
6	Trial Evidence	Security Cracker	Donor Organ	Locked Security Container	Valuable Painting	Legendary Warbanner

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Table 6 - Random Key Information / Target of Objective [Knowledge Missions]

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Accident Investigation	Cybernetic Schematics	Starship Blueprints	Where Did They Go?	Why a Race Died Out	Alien Technology / Knowledge
2	Scientific Discovery	Origins of a Disease	Discover Weakness	Ancient Secret	Weapon Blueprints	Defensive System Blueprints
3	Escape Route	Uncover Conspiracy	Ancient Language	Location of Something	Chemical Formula	Criminal Evidence Gathering
4	Identify Terrorist	Agent Identity	Location of Someone	Galactic Legends	Identify Artefact	Origins of an Unidentified Signal
5	Accounts	Medical Cure	State Secret	Mystical Tome	Where Do They Come From?	Installation / Building Plans
6	Disprove Theory	Superweapon Schematics	Who Were They?	Traitor Identity	What Happened There?	Mapping the Unexplored

Table 7 - Random Corporate Aim / Target of Objective [Corporate Missions]

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 - 3	Takeover	Bring Down / Destroy	Expose Corruption	Rescue Reputation	Counter Threat	Internal Investigation
4 - 6	Industrial Sabotage	Blackmail	Corrupt Exec	Ruin Reputation	Monopolise	Industrial Espionage

Table 8 - Random Military Objective / Target of Objective [Military Missions]

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 - 2	Pathfinder	Invade	Disaster Aid	Liberate	Infiltrate	Peacekeeping
3 - 4	Defend	Ambush	Evacuate	Attack / Destroy	Rescue	Seek and Destroy
5 - 6	Scout / Recon	Support Mission	Armed Coup	Patrol	Take and Hold	Pre-emptive Strike

Table 9 - Random Diplomacy / Target of Objectives [Diplomatic Missions]

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 - 2	Peace Keeping	Extradition	Civil Revolt	First Contact	Market Monopoli-sation	Border Negotiations
3 - 4	Disinfor-mation	Alliance Negotiations	Peace Treaty	Hostage Negotiation	Trade Dispute / Strike	Enemy of my Enemy
5 - 6	Mistaken Identity	Prisoner Exchange	Arbitration	Import / Export Rights	Intimidation	Trade Agreement / Business Deal

Table 10 - Complications

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Alien Entity	Monsters	Legal Problems	Critical Item Stolen	Hitman / Assassin	Arrested for Brawling
2	Funding Problems	Equipment Failure	Quarantined Objective	Travel Difficulties	Destruction of Transport	War
3	Communication Problem	Jealous Ex-Lover / Partner	Ambushed	Misinformation	Breakdown	Double / Opposing Agent
4	Language Barrier	Military Intervention	Red Herring	Government Corruption	Local Gang War	Mistaken Identity
5	Disease	Party Bounty	Better Offer	Natural Disaster	Public Transport	Inter-party Squabbling
6	Beaten to the Objective	Narcotic Addiction	Inaccurate Mission Intel	Power Struggle	Rival Party	Local Mob Interference

[*Chapter 25: Plot Generator & The Adventure Funnel*]▷

Table 11 - Reasons

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Why Not?	Pure Evil	Diplomatic Error	Recent Crime	Kidnapping	Blood Feud
2	Past defeat	Being Controlled	Training	Divert Attention	Visions	Desperate
3	Delusional	Enslaved	Heresy	Caused Offence	Forged Identity	Recent Embarrassment
4	Clerical Error	Insanity	Past crime	Being Led	Hatred	Wanted Dead or Alive
5	Recent Defeat	Greedy	Financial Debt	Past Embarrassment	Debt of Honour	Inexplicable Alien Reason
6	Being Chased	Mistaken Identity	Cover a Mistake	Stupidity	Revenge	Holy Quest

Table 12 - Who?

Roll 2D6, use the rolls as row and column

D1 vs D2	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 - 3	Alien Race	Pirates / Rebels	Higher Intelligence	Machine Intelligence	Empire / Government	Emerging Intelligence
4 - 6	Individual	Mystical Force	Organisation	Organised Crime	Unusual lifeform	Law Enforcement Agency

Space Hazzards

If you want some more details on Asteroid Fields and Nebulae try these tables.

Asteroid Fields

When you encounter an asteroid field, roll a dice and check this table each turn;

1-3	**Small asteroids**	Point Defence Stunt automatically deals with them. Otherwise you must roll at least a Superb result with your weapon roll/s or take 1 Structural Stress in damage
4	**Medium asteroids**	Advanced Point Defence Stunt automatically deals with them. Otherwise you must roll at least a Great result with your weapon roll/s or take 2 Structural Stress in damage
5	**Major asteroid**	You must roll at least a Good result with your weapon roll/s and cause a total of 4 stress in damage or more, or take 4 Structural Stress in damage
6	**Colossal asteroid**	You must roll at least a Good result with your weapon roll/s and cause a total of 8 stress in damage or more, or take 8 Structural Stress in damage

Nebulae

When you encounter a Nebula field roll a single die and check this table each turn;

1-3	**Low Field Strength**	Advanced Sensor Suite or Electronic Warfare Suite and the Hardened Ship Systems Stunt protects you from attack, otherwise suffer 1 Ship System stress damage
4	**Medium Field Strength**	Advanced Sensor Suite or Electronic Warfare Suite and the Hardened Ship Systems Stunt protects you from attack, otherwise suffer 2 Ship System stress damage.
5	**Major Field Strength**	You must roll at least a Great result with Advanced Sensor Suite or Electronic Warfare Suite to protect you from attack, otherwise suffer 4 Ship System stress damage
6	**Colossal Field Strength**	You must roll at least a Superb result with Advanced Sensor Suite or Electronic Warfare Suite to protect you from attack, otherwise suffer 8 Ship System stress damage

Making Your Escape

If you wish to leave an asteroid field or nebula roll a single die;

1-4	You're still in the field – roll again above
5-6	You escape from the field

[*Chapter 25: Plot Generator & The Adventure Funnel*]▷

The Adventure Funnel

The Adventure Funnel, created by Andrew "Dr. Rotwang!" Reyes, takes you through the creative process of developing a storyline – it's a really fun process and big thanks to Andrew for giving us permission to include it here.

The Adventure Funnel basically helps you focus your creativity. It's concise, it's free-form and it's interactive. The best way to explain it is to do so whilst you actually do it, so go get a piece of paper and a pencil. No, I'm serious. Get up and do it. Remember this process is not a substitute for creativity, just a funnel for ideas. You've been warned.

STEP 1: GOAL

Write down a one-sentence objective for your players to accomplish (you could roll on the Nature of Mission and then Mission Objective tables). Resist the temptation to overcomplicate it. Make sure that your sentence begins with a verb! For example, here's a goal for a **Starblazer Legend**:

GOAL:

Deliver and sell 200 tons of music by intergalactic rock band The Planet Tamers to a buyer on Tortuin.

STEP 2: OBSTACLES

When players just waltz in and win, it's not that much fun. Conflict means drama, OK? So brainstorm some ideas – yes that means jot down some things, ANY things, that could get between the players and the goal. Write down stupid stuff, too, as you think of it. That's the idea behind brainstorming, don't judge an idea till you've finished writing everything down as it may make an odd kind of sense later on.

So here are some ideas for obstacles:

OBSTACLES:

1. Pirates
2. Customs
3. The merchandise is counterfeit and contraband!
4. No buyer, ha ha!
5. Cinnibar, the famous Amazonian barbarian, shows up

STEP 3: DETAILS

Here's where the real work begins. It's brainstorming on a finer scale. Look over your previous work and start sketching in the finer points, as you think of them. Anything that fleshes out the goal, the obstacles or just the world goes here. You'll be surprised at how quickly these details will start to resolve. When something starts to click (and it will), go with it.

DETAILS:

1. The Planet Tamers based their name on the well known mercenary, but they didn't ask him if they could use his name. It's all new rave galactic rock, lots of long hair, AI controlled spandex outfits and neon colours. Think Freedom Anthems.
2. The head of Starport Authority on Toruin is a guy named Archibald Goose, 68, near retirement.
3. The government of Tortuin just flipped over from an oligarchy to a charismatic dictatorship, focused on "cultural purity". Hence, The Planet Tamer is illegal.
4. If that wasn't bad enough the copies are counterfeit!
5. Cinnibar—A gorgeous barbarian from Babalon gets drunk at the same bar as the characters, and starts a fight, she likes fighting, a lot!. Inconsequential but fun. maybe an interesting, recurring Extra who returns to help them?
6. The pirates are Centauri naval deserters, raiding not for profit but for survival and hate the Tortuin
7. The customs office is short-staffed on account of a Tortuin Gas Bag Floater epidemic.
8. The new government came into power following a short but bloody civil war. Fascists, the lot of 'em.
9. Cargo is contraband, and when word gets out that it's in the Starport, TWO buyers present themselves: organized crime and freedom-fighters. The players must choose with whom to do business!
10. The freedom fighter representative is an attractive lass named Danielle Dubois, who hates Cinnibar as she stole her man!.

Get the idea? Obviously the whole "Contraband" angle made sense and we ran with it. You could easily go on. If you want to expand on this, simply take an idea out of your list and put it into its own Funnel, setting the minor goal, putting up minor obstacles and

detailing fiddly bits that relate to it. It needn't become the main focus of the scenario, but if you think it'll help to have the stuff handy (or if the players decide to focus on it themselves, which of course they will), you'll have some notes to guide you. It works in much the same way as Fate fractal concept, you can focus down indefinitely.

Here's an example of going in to more detail on the goal of selling the cargo:

GOAL:

Sell the cargo to Danielle Dubois

OBSTACLES:

1. She's being watched by the Secret Police
2. Nowhere to make an easy delivery
3. Have to forge the cargo's papers
4. She's constantly on the move
5. She'll get in to a fight with Cinnibar regardless of the risk

DETAILS:

1. Secret Police travel in packs of 4, well-armed
2. Danielle knows of a warehouse at the old Mint, 2 miles from the Starport
3. Etc...

Again, resist the temptation to provide too much detail; give yourself room to improvise later on. Use this stuff as a basis for winging it, not a script for railroading players.

STEP 4: ASPECTS

Think of a few Aspects that now jump to mind for the locale. They should be inspired by the Obstacles and Details.

1. Rock music will change the galaxy!
2. I've run this Starport like a well oiled engine and now those idiots think they own the place
3. We live to serve the new purity. Please stand still whilst we execute you!
4. She took my man!
5. Patrols with itchy trigger fingers around every corner
6. A man who hates the government can get anything in this city
7. The Tortuin have got it coming from the Centauri

And so on...

STEP 5: ASSISTANCE AND REWARDS (Optional)

Anything that might be in the players favour can, but needn't be, listed. You may have already written it down in Step 3 but here are some examples. Same for what they stand to gain, so you could have listed Danielle's offer for the cargo in the details.

1. A group of Freedom Fighters will help when they can, if the player's sell them the music to distribute
2. Cinnibar just wants to fight, a lot!
3. Archibald Goose hates the new government as they're messing with how he runs the Starport
4. The Centauri pirates hate the Tortuin navy and will help the players in return for hooking them up with the freedom fighters to find a new home.
5. Danielle Dubois can arrange for an upgrade for the player's ship of an Average (+1) non weapon or defence system as payment for the music
6. The crime syndicate will pay for a Fair (+2) upgrade to the player's ship for the music to sell to the public rather than give away for free. Oh, and let them live.
7. If the players help the Freedom Fighters they will get a Good (+3) cargo of high tech goods to sell elsewhere as thanks and have access to the new planetary government's support as an Organisation later in the campaign.

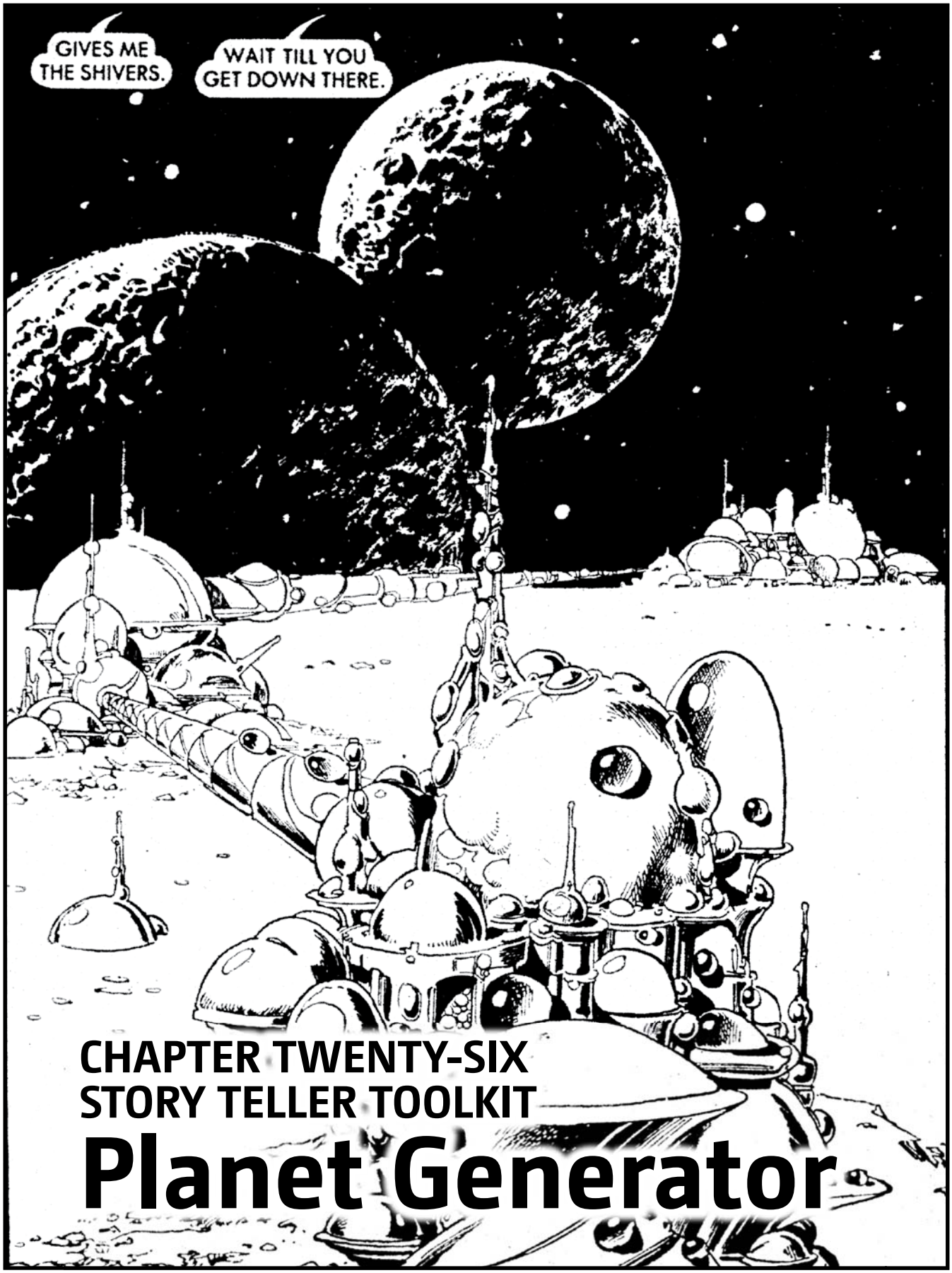
You may not use everything you wrote down through this process. That's okay. Scratch off what you *did* use and stick the notes in a folder. Next time you're stuck for something...

Possibilities abound. Scale the scope up and down, and you can do anything from a single encounter to a multi-part epic campaign, wherein each obstacle is a few sessions long.

Starblazer Legends Chapter

Rather than create an entire Starblazer Legend of your own, you could just pick one of the Legends described in the Starblazer Legends chapter (see page 495) and play it out. These are Legends taken from the original ***Starblazer*** issues. Whilst not a comprehensive summary, it does include a number of the more interesting Legends from the original issues.

[*Chapter 25: Plot Generator & The Adventure Funnel*]▷



CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX
STORY TELLER TOOLKIT

Planet Generator

Planet Generator

"This planet hath a pleasant scan; the air nimbly and sweetly recommends itself unto our gentle sensors."

Captain Duncan, preparing to land on Glamis IV

Use this chapter when you need to generate a planet as part of a background or plot. You create a planet by selecting its general type, then assigning Skills, Aspects and Stunts just as you do for characters and Starships. You can either deliberately select these details for your planet, or randomly determine them using the tables listed (or select some and randomise the others). Random selection is made by the usual method of rolling 2D6 and subtracting one from the other.

Remember, if players are using this to create a planet, the Story Teller can at any time, place restrictions on permissible results. For example, the Story Teller may declare that the tech level "Legendary" is not available. Should you get a result that has been deemed unavailable by the Story Teller, just re-roll it until you get one that is.

Planet Classes

Gas Giant

Gas giants are planets made up mostly of gaseous material (comparatively little solid matter). They are generally the most massive of planet types, and have very dense atmospheres (mainly hydrogen and helium). They often have a ring system and a large number of moons. They have no discernable surface so cannot be landed on.

Populations live either in habitats floating in the atmosphere, soaking up enormous punishment from the strong violent winds, in orbital stations, or on stable moons. Gas giants settlements are usually industrial, mining, or military in nature. Pure civilian populations connected to gas giants are rare.

A sub-class referred to as "Ice Giants" are similar though smaller in size and have a higher composition of ice and rock.

Terrestrial Planet

Terrestrial planets are similar to Earth (i.e. largely composed mainly of rock). These are the most common planets to originate life. They vary in the amount of water present, ranging from virtual water worlds to barren waterless waste worlds. These are the most common inhabited planets found, with populations living on land, on and under the oceans, in the atmosphere, and in orbit.

Dwarf Planet

Smaller "planetoids", usually terrestrial in nature (i.e. mainly rock), these are typically small planets, often smaller than the moons of other planets.

There is also a sub-class, the Ice Dwarves, which are basically balls of ice.

Populations of Dwarf planets are usually small and tend to live in hollowed out areas or in large bases built onto their surface. Dwarf planets do not generally have much of an atmosphere (if any).

Artificial Planet

Artificial planet covers anything large enough to qualify as planetary scale (class 8) or colossal scale (class 7) and drifts through space (propelled or otherwise) but did not occur naturally.

Examples include hollowed out comets converted for occupation, a propelled network of tethered asteroids, or ships and space stations constructed on such a scale that they meet the size requirements. Life forms large enough to meet the requirements and support life would also count.

Mercury	Terrestrial
Venus	Terrestrial
Earth	Terrestrial
Mars	Terrestrial
Ceres	Dwarf
Jupiter	Gas Giant
Saturn	Gas Giant
Uranus	Ice Giant
Neptune	Ice Giant
Pluto	Ice Dwarf
Eris	Ice Dwarf

Examining the Terran Solar System (TSS), its main planetary bodies are classified as listed here.

Generating a Planet

1) Type of planet

Start by determining the type of planet using 2D6 (or selecting one of the following):

Roll	Result	Scale of planet
-5	Artificial Planet	Colossal (class 7)
-4 -3	Ice Giant	Planetary (class 8)
-2 -1	Gas Giant	Planetary (class 8)
0 +1	Terrestrial Planet	Planetary (class 8)
+2	Ice Dwarf Planet	Colossal (class 7)
+3 +4	Dwarf Planet	Colossal (class 7)
+5	Artificial Planet	Planetary (class 8)

Then determine some defining features if the planet type is terrestrial or artificial.

1A) Terrestrial Planets

If your planet is a terrestrial one, you will need to further qualify the nature of its primary terrain type.

-5 Barren	-1 Jungle	+3 Volcanic
-4 Desert	0 Mixed	+4 Mixed
-3 Volcanic	+1 Barren	+5 Jungle
-2 Desert	+2 Water	

1B) Artificial Planets

If your planet is an artificial one, determine its origin:

-5	Alien artefact	0	Colonisation vessel
-4	Immense spherical Starship	+1	Hollowed out comet
-3	Hollowed out asteroid	+2	Drifting Space Station
-2	Immense spherical Starship	+3	Hollowed out comet
-1	Hollowed out asteroid	+4	Drifting Space Station
		+5	Alien lifeform

2) Atmosphere

Next, determine the atmosphere of the planet:

-5 to -2	Atmosphere incapable of supporting life
-1 to 0	Breathable atmosphere
+1	Atmosphere is toxic
+2	Atmosphere is acidic
+3 to +5	Planet does not have an atmosphere

- Gas and Ice Giants automatically acquire the "Atmosphere incapable of supporting life" result.
- For Dwarves and Ice Dwarves, re-roll any results of "breathable atmosphere".
- At the Story Teller's discretion, Artificial Planets may automatically acquire the "Breathable atmosphere" result.

3) Moons and Ring Systems

Some planets have ring systems, most have moons. Use the following to determine whether your planet has either of these:

-1 or less	No ring system
0	Arc ring system
+1 or +2	Faint ring system
+3 or more	Full ring system

-4 or less	No moons
-3 to -2	Single moon
-1 to 0	A few moons
+1	Several moons
+2 to +3	Many moons
+4 or more	Large number of moons

(Note – Artificial planets never have rings or moons)

Then apply the following modifiers to the position on the table (adding or subtracting from the row position rather than the total on the dice):

Planet type	Ring	Moons
Terrestrial	0	-2 rows
Gas Giant	+3 rows	+3 rows
Ice Giant	+2 rows	+2 rows
Dwarf/Ice Dwarf	0	-2 rows
Artificial	No ring	No moons

As an example, suppose you previously rolled for a gas giant, and now roll a total of -4 for the number of moons which is "None" (i.e. the planet has no moons), and you roll 0 for the ring system which is "Arc ring system". You then apply the modifiers to these results. So for a gas giant, the moon modifier is +3, so the result of "None" is shifted upward 3 rows to "Several moons" and the ring modifier for a gas giant is also +3 so that result is shifted upward 3 rows to "Full ring system". The shift is actual one over "Full ring system" but since this exceeds the scale end, it is capped to "Full ring system".

4) Population

Determine the population level of your planet:

-5 Average	**-1** Fair	**+3** Epic
-4 Average	**0** Good	**+4** Average
-3 Fair	**+1** Great	**+5** Legendary
-2 Average	**+2** Superb	

To give you an idea of the population levels these represent, use the following guidelines:

Population	Size	Examples
Average	*100s*	Research stations Observation posts
Fair	*1000s*	Larger outposts / research stations, Newly settled worlds (terraformers)
Good	*100,000s*	Small colonies
Great	*Millions*	Minor established planets
Superb	*Billions*	Typical established planets
Epic	*100s of Billions*	Typical Major planets
Legendary	*1000s of billions*	Capital planets, Major planets from large empires

5) Skills

Each planet has a set of mandatory Skills and Aspects. Again, the levels of these can be chosen or randomly determined.

Determine the level of each skill in turn. If you are selecting them randomly, use the following table to establish the levels one at a time:

-5	Average
-4	Average
-3	Fair
-2	Average
-1	Fair
0	Good
+1	Great
+2	Superb
+3	Epic
+4	Average
+5	Legendary

Planetary Skills

Diplomacy
Measures the strength of the diplomatic clout carried by the ruling body

Resources (wealth)
Describes the financial resources available to the planet

Resources (materials)
Represents the material holdings of a planet

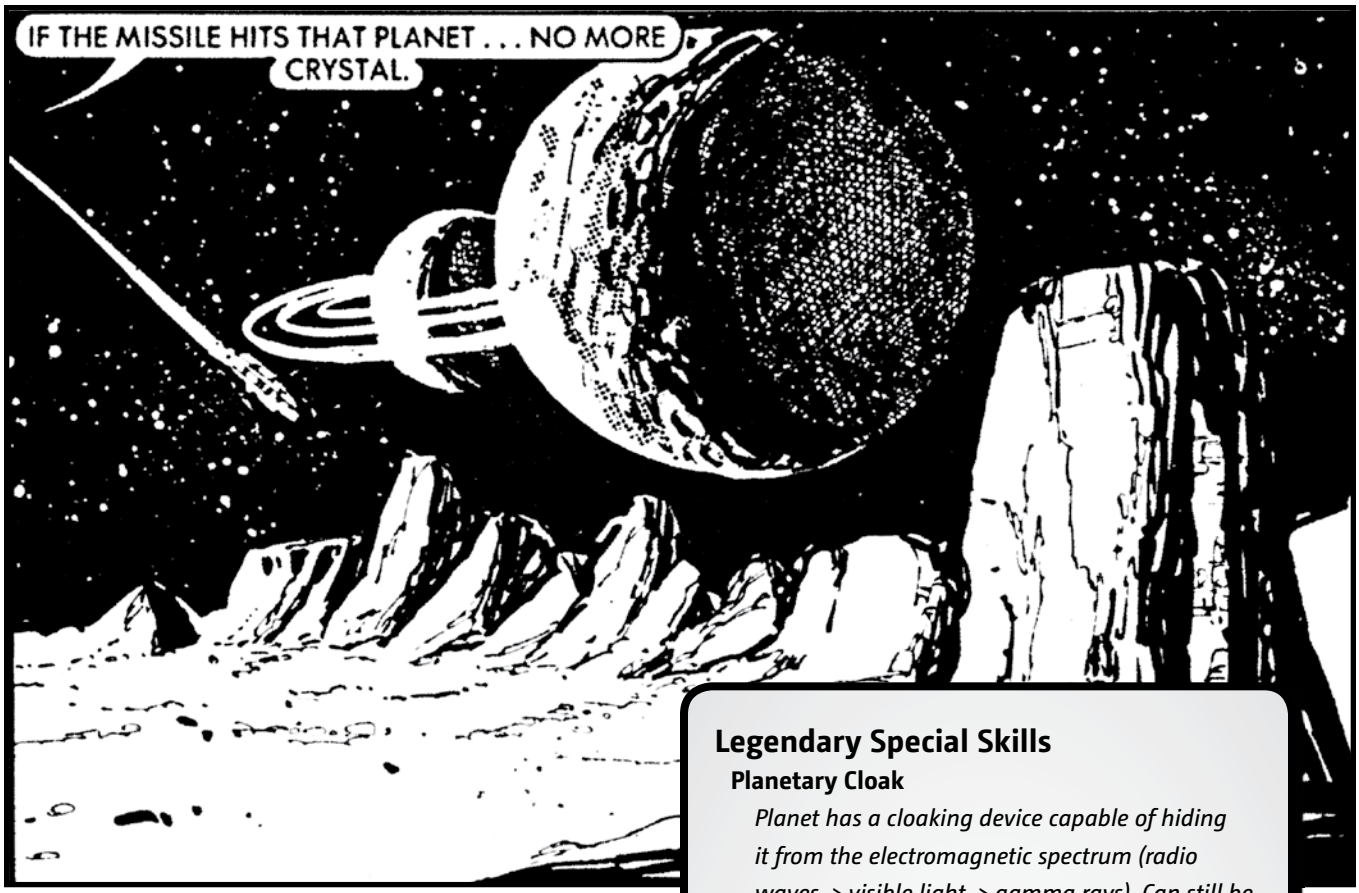
Resources (industrial)
Defines the planet's industrial strength in both raw materials and manufacturing

Military capability
Indicates the level of military strength the planet can bring to bear

Planetary security
Marks how effective the planet's intelligence and local security/enforcement units are

Tech level
Describes the planet's technology level

Trade level
Defines the trade capability of the planet



5A) Legendary Tech Level Special Skills

If you choose or roll a "Legendary" result for the planet's tech level (providing the Story Teller allows a legendary tech level), you may also choose to add one of the special Skills to augment the planet as shown here. All count as Skills at the legendary level.

These planetary Skills are obviously extremely powerful and may only be selected by players at the Story Teller's discretion.

Legendary Special Skills

Planetary Cloak

Planet has a cloaking device capable of hiding it from the electromagnetic spectrum (radio waves-> visible light-> gamma rays). Can still be detected by gravity-sensitive detectors. In game terms treat the planet as having a Legendary (+8) Skill level Shroud Generator (see Starship Systems, Skills & Stunts, Chapter 19).

Phase Shifter

Allows the planet to shift out of phase with space-time. Whilst active, the planet and everything within the phase field may not interact with anything outside the phase field unless it too has phase shifted.

Planetary Shield

Planet is defended by a huge Legendary (+8) Skill level energy shield. The shielded world can only be attacked by weapons of Legendary Skill level or greater, Unusual or Unthinkable weapons. The shield reduces the effect of Unusual weapons to 4 Stress and Unthinkable weapons are reduced to causing an Extreme Consequence.

Induced Space-time anomaly

Planet is located near an artificial anomaly that makes FTL travel near it impossible. Any Starship attempting FTL within the planet's solar system is ripped apart by the effect.

6) Planetary Aspects

Now, establish any Aspects related to the planet. Some are mandatory, others optional. As with everything in Starblazer Adventures, you are free to make your own up. For the optional Aspects, we list a few examples and leave the rest to your imagination.

6A) Mandatory Aspects

Planetary Government

Specify the type of governing body that controls the planet.

-4 or less	No governing body
-3	Pirate kingdom
-2	Religious order
-1	Corporate control
0	Democratic government
+1	Feudal / Monarchy (Oligarchy)
+2	Dictatorship
+3	Penal colony
+4 or more	Lawless (tribal)

Parent Star Classification

Identify the type of star the planet is orbiting

-5	None (planet is drifting in space)
-4 to -3	White dwarf (dying remnant of an imploded star)
-2 to 0	Main sequence (middle aged star)
+1 to +2	Giant (low mass stars near end of life)
+3	Supergiant (high mass stars near end of life)
+4	Binary star system (two stars orbiting each other)
+5	Exotic star system (trinary star system, alien engineered system etc)

6B) Example Aspects

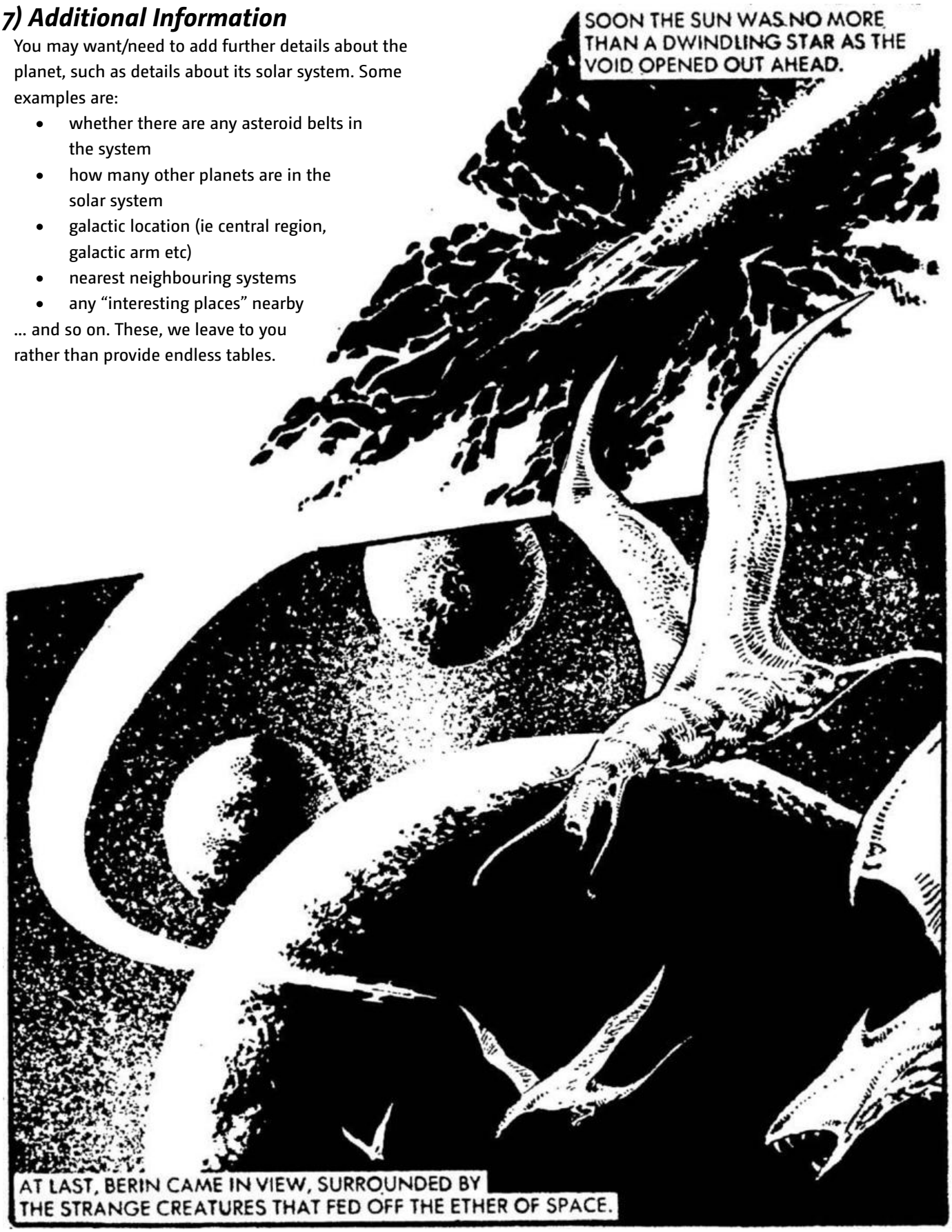
- Back-end of Nowhere
- Best Kept Secret in the Sector
- Best Planet in the Sector, Designed by Nature, Ruled by Idiots
- Captain Jim Died Here
- Den Of Iniquity
- Exotic Life Forms To Order
- Finest Defensive Navy In The Sector, When They're Actually Here
- Greatest Alien Zoo In The Galaxy
- Here Be Dragons
- Laws? Yeah, We Have Laws - They All End With A Weapon, The Bigger The Better
- Let Us Light Up Your World - Planet Killers Are Our Specialty
- Malevolence With Style - Custom Designed Planetary Takeovers
- Most Advanced Medical Facilities In The Sector
- My Moon Is A Giant Space Alien
- Need A Top Assassin? Look No Further
- Our Local Ship Eating Space Creatures Can Cross Our Solar System In 20 Terran Minutes... Can You?
- Pirate Heaven
- Pirates? Yes We Have Plenty Of Those. Several Are Converging On You Now...
- Ruled With An Iron Fist
- Secret Research Base (But No-One Knows, Honest!)
- Source Of Rare Resources
- Toughest Prison In The Galaxy
- Underworld Capital
- Visitors Not Welcome
- Wait Till You See The Size Of Our Orbital Cannons...
- We Are Not A Dictatorship: Anyone Disagreeing Will Be Executed
- We Don't Accept Riff-Raff Here
- Wealth Of Alien Spares
- Who In Their Right Mind Wants To Go There?
- Who Left That Rusting Battlecruiser In Orbit?
- With Leaders Like Ours, Who Needs Enemies?

7) Additional Information

You may want/need to add further details about the planet, such as details about its solar system. Some examples are:

- whether there are any asteroid belts in the system
- how many other planets are in the solar system
- galactic location (ie central region, galactic arm etc)
- nearest neighbouring systems
- any "interesting places" nearby

... and so on. These, we leave to you rather than provide endless tables.


SOON THE SUN WAS NO MORE THAN A DWINDLING STAR AS THE VOID OPENED OUT AHEAD.
AT LAST, BERIN CAME IN VIEW, SURROUNDED BY THE STRANGE CREATURES THAT FED OFF THE ETHER OF SPACE.

[*Chapter 26: Planet Generator*]▷

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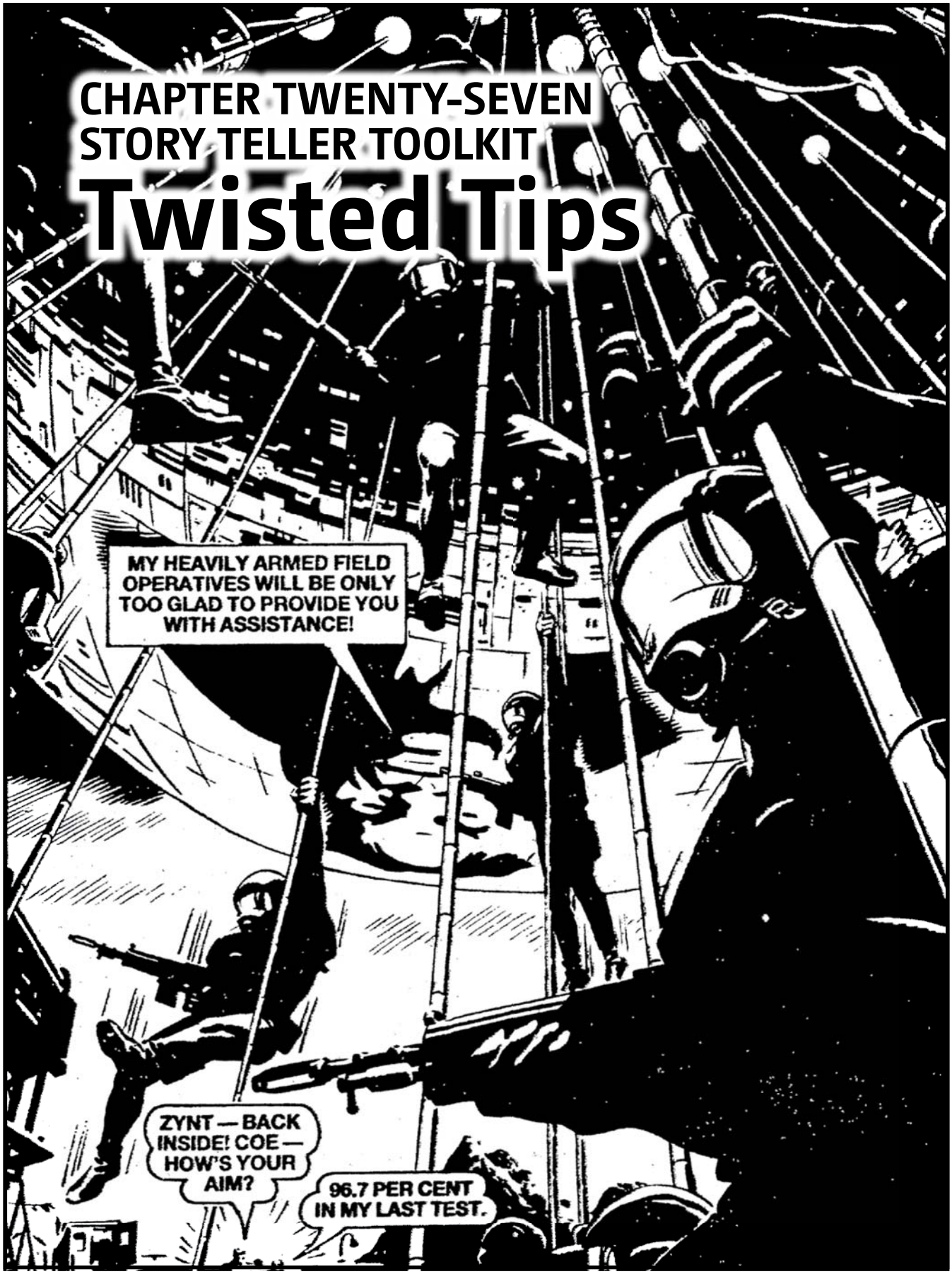

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN
STORY TELLER TOOLKIT
Twisted Tips
MY HEAVILY ARMED FIELD OPERATIVES WILL BE ONLY TOO GLAD TO PROVIDE YOU WITH ASSISTANCE!
ZYNT — BACK INSIDE! COE — HOW'S YOUR AIM?
96.7 PER CENT IN MY LAST TEST.

Story Teller Twisted Tips

Here are some tips and tricks to help you create and run a great game of *Starblazer Adventures* from plotting great stories, managing the drama and pace of a game, to improvising the details when all your plans fall apart.

Top Tips for Story Tellers

Okay some of these may be obvious but it doesn't hurt to chat through these points...

Before the game

If you're hosting the game make sure you've got plenty of drinks and snacks or ask people to bring a bottle. Perhaps one of the group could offer to cook? Or you? There's nothing better than a dinner invitation to encourage people to turn up, especially for people who are new to gaming! As I've mentioned elsewhere you'd be surprised how many people will come over for 'dinner and a game'.

Print off a copy of the rules summary on page 590 for everyone (you can also download a copy from www.starblazeradventures.com to save bending the spine of the book). You could put it in a plastic slipcover to keep it free of coffee stains and greasy fingerprints.

Have a look at the art galleries – are there some images that you could use to illustrate a scene, a Starship or place? Book mark the pages or print off (from the pdf version) the images for when you need to show them to the players. There's nothing like a great image to help stimulate people's imaginations.

Take short notes of any rules sections you think will be needed during the game to avoid having to check the rules during the session.

Make a list of each the player character's Aspects – this way you'll know what Aspects you could compel during the gameplay. This will make it more interesting for each player and help them to earn Fate points and is a good guide to the kinds of situations players would like to see their character's in.

Make a list of any Skills that NONE of the characters possess – you should avoid creating situations where these are required and it's also a guide to what kinds of things the players don't really want to take part in.

Make a list of the top two or three Skills (and their Skill levels) possessed by each character – this is a good guide to what kinds of things the players want to see their characters doing. Knowing the Skill level will help you gauge difficulties for any important obstacles.

During the game

Make sure there's no distraction – TV or radio – in the background. There's nothing worst than trying to run a game with people who are watching the TV over your shoulder.

Ask that everyone turns their phone's off or to silent and keep phone calls to breaks.

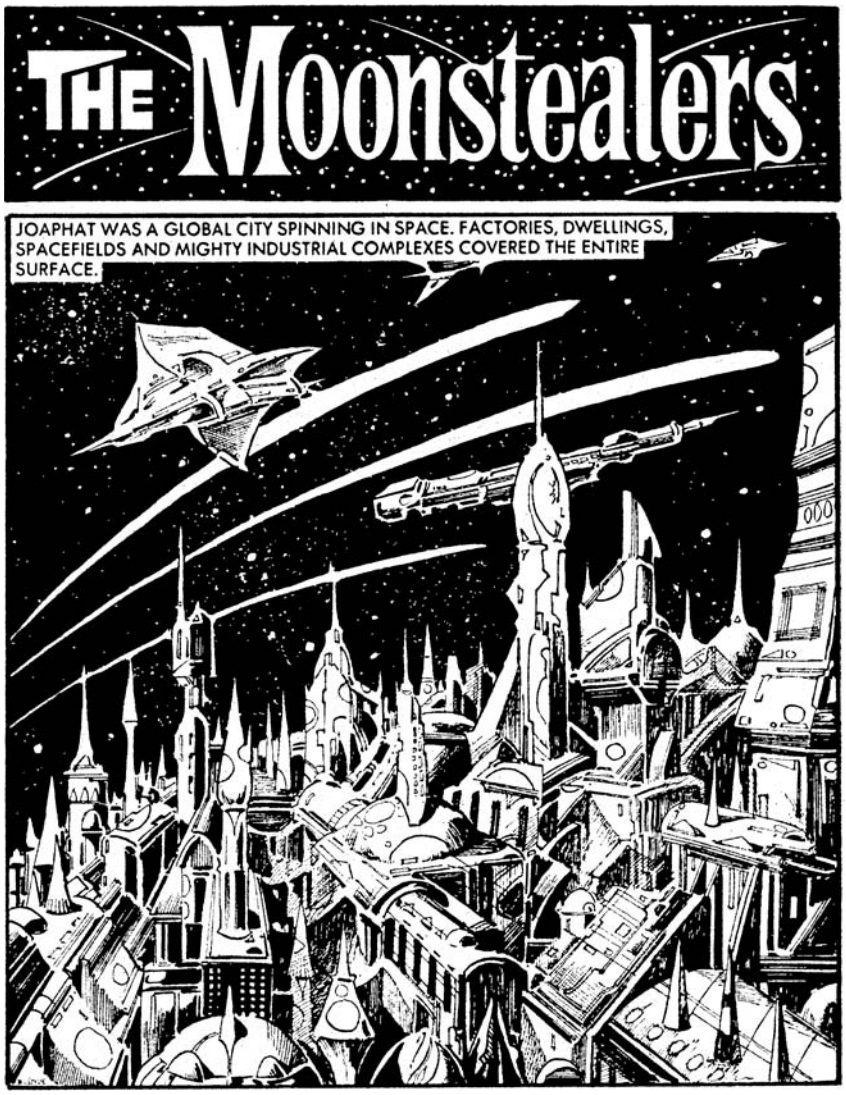
Don't read the rule book during a session. I'm serious! If you're constantly checking this book it gets boring for everyone and detracts from the amazing story you're all creating. Ask yourself this question. Do you have a rough idea of the answer to what you're looking for? If yes go with it, if not and it's a critical piece of information that could affect the story or experience for the players then call time out for a drinks / snack break whilst you check the rules. Remember this is an adventure game not a math's lesson. That means people should be having great adventures not sitting around whilst you work out a number should be +2 or +4.

Make a point of compelling the character's Aspects – the Fate rules are powered by Fate points – players will run out of a Fate points and can earn new ones during a session through your compels. Don't forget to award Fate points for characters who pull off spectacular things, do something brave or selfless, you could even award a Fate point for someone who made dinner, paid for the takeaway or made you a coffee!

Keep the game going, don't be afraid to make things up on the fly, improvise and keep the story flowing rather than let it become bogged down in which modifiers are important.

Establishing Characters

While using the on-the-fly character creation rules is great for people new to this type of game, that's not necessarily the best solution. The actual process of creating characters in advance can be very rewarding and helps flesh out stories, relationships between characters and backgrounds. This make plotting storylines easier for you as you can draw on this detailed materials to help you come up with ideas of how the characters could be more deeply involved. For example let's say one character's Starblazer Legend


THE Moonstealers
JOAPHAT WAS A GLOBAL CITY SPINNING IN SPACE. FACTORIES, DWELLINGS, SPACEFIELDS AND MIGHTY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEXES COVERED THE ENTIRE SURFACE.

involved stealing a valuable religious artifact from an infamous alien cult. Well guess who just dropped in for tea?! That's an immediate idea for occassional encounters with minions of the cult tracing the character but perhaps you could tie the cult in to your plot, immediately making it more interesting for the player and their co-star in that particular Legend.

The Starblazer Adventure Plot Framework

In Chapter 25 we've given you a simple random plot generator and the fabulous Adventure Funnel to help you devise your own stories. Once you've run a few games you'll have a good idea how to create and maintain stories and plots that engage the players – especially if you're following our top tips for Story Telling above! Sometimes all you'll need is an adventure titles – and if you're stuck just pull something out of the Starblazer Issue list in the Appendix.

There's advice for running adventures later on in this chapter which will be helpful to you, but some of it may take some getting used to. Until you're comfortable with a little improvisation, you're going to want to start with a pretty structured model, and that's where this section comes in.

Once you've got your plot ideas here's a structure for how to lead your players through that devious story you've come up with. With the bones of the structure in place, you can start elaborating on it to suit your needs, but if you ever get stumped, just come back to this simple model.

1. Endanger the Characters
2. Reveal the True Danger
3. The Pursuit Encounters Complications
4. Certain Doom
5. The Twist
6. Final Showdown
7. Breakneck Escape (Optional)

Obviously, this is not the model for *every* Starblazer plot. Rather, it is a structure to follow in creating plots until you want to discard it. You also are not obliged to determine the components of the outline in any particular order. Find something that interests you, put it in the appropriate slot, and then fill in the other slots to better justify it. If you have a really cool deathtrap you want to throw the characters into, go ahead and put it in as Certain Doom, then figure out the rest so the deathtrap makes sense. If you're at a loss for where to begin, start with the Final Showdown. It's going to be the most dramatic element of the game, and what villains and elements it includes may suggest how to handle some of the earlier elements.

Endanger the Characters

It may seem odd that the first thing is figuring out how to threaten the characters. Intuitively, it might seem more reasonable to figure out where the game opens. As it happens, these are one and the same

thing. Figuring out how you're going to endanger the characters contains a large component that depends on where they're going to be. Environmental hazards require certain settings, as do fleet battles or covert urban operations. The nature of the danger will suggest the setting.

With that in mind, the nature of the danger can vary greatly. The most basic sort of danger is an unexpected attack. This is usually performed by a group of low-quality, highly distinctive minions of the villain, sometimes led by a lieutenant of some sort. The goal of the attack can vary greatly. They might be after the characters, they might be after someone else at the location, they could be there to steal or destroy something; they might even be there by accident. In determining why they're there, you put the first piece into place regarding the plot.

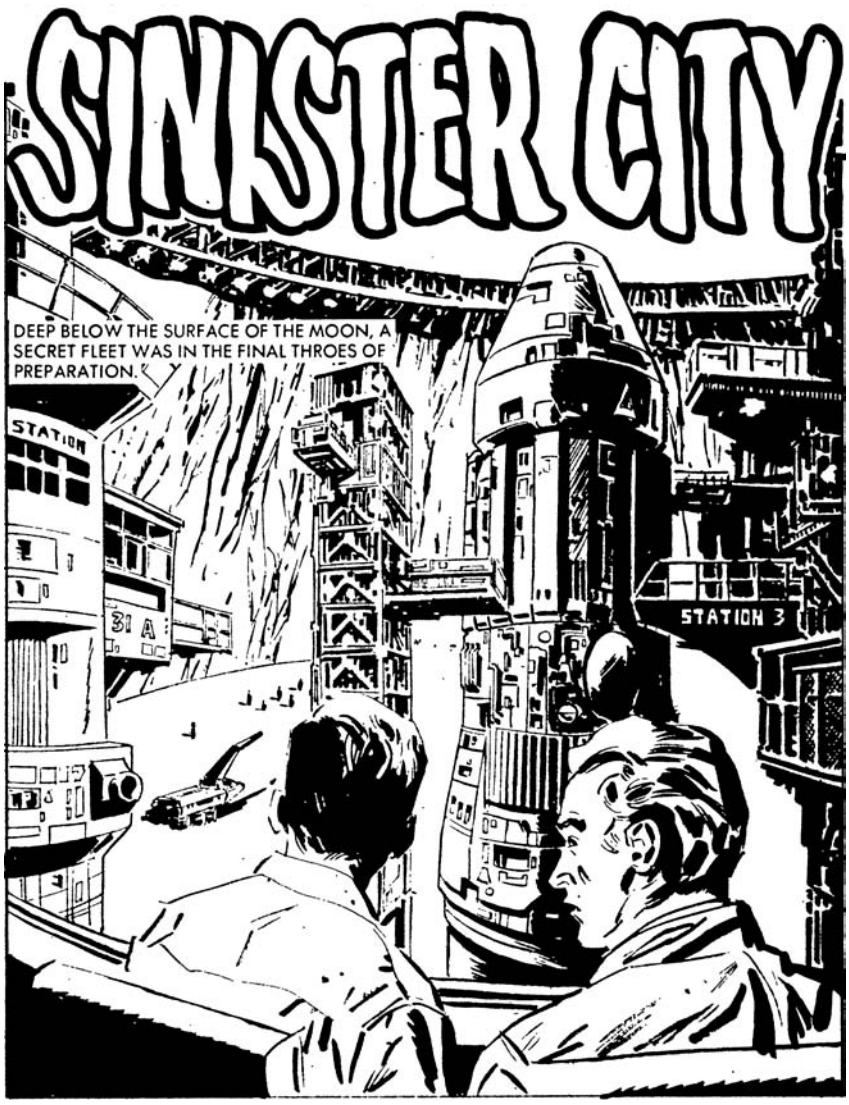
Alternately, the danger might be environmental: a Starship crippled and losing air fast, a colony suffering from unexpected violent storms, an underwater city flooding. Any of these is a suitable threat to get things going. Sometimes there is a motive behind the danger, like someone setting the building on fire, and sometimes it's just bad timing. The cause is important to determine, if only for what it implies. A crippled Starship losing air because it's been sabotaged means that the danger is the saboteur. A Starship crashing on an unknown world is usually a precursor to adventures in a dangerous alien environment. It's also possible to mix and match dangers. A building with a bomb in it requires evacuation as well as discovering and disarming the bomb. Whatever the danger, it is important that it is a legitimate threat, and that the characters can deal with it in some way. Even if they can't stop it entirely, they shouldn't be helpless bystanders—they can save civilians, keep pirates from taking all the colonists hostage or keep the stricken Starship from crashing in to a mountain, killing everyone on board. Go into the game assuming that players will drastically impact the flow of events, and plan anything you feel needs to happen around that assumption.

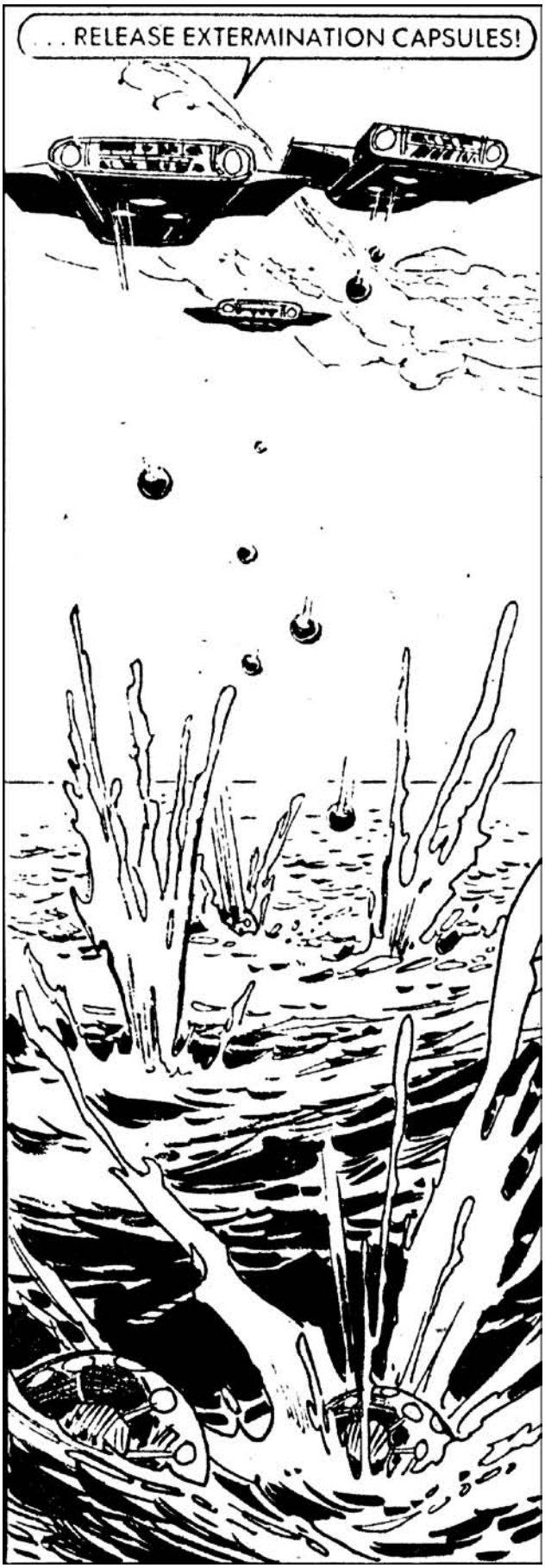
Possible Dangers

- The characters are caught up in a firefight between bizarre alien robots and Star Patrol
- Strange storms wreak havoc on the colony
- An unknown virus is sweeping across the world causing panic
- The characters world is attacked by pirates
- The Starship the characters are on is sabotaged and may crash land on an uncharted world

Reveal the True Danger

Whatever the cause of the previous danger, it was only a taste of things to come. This is the opportunity for characters with strong investigative talents to shine, as they discover the pieces of the puzzle, revealing at least part of why things are in trouble, and where to go next. This step requires two important things – an explanation, and a clue. The explanation does not need to be complete. It may be





known that the villains are up to something involving the ancient Warmachines of Centauri, but that doesn't mean that anyone knows precisely what.

The clue should point to a place. It may be that it points to a person in that place, or a thing in the place, but it should draw a clear line towards where the characters should go next. It should also suggest that time is of the essence, so there is strong impetus to get moving.

Some Revelations

- The mysterious robots that attacked the characters were marked with the symbol of the the Warmachines of Centauri, the same machines that supposedly crashed on one of the worlds of the Taurian system
- The storms started just as the mysterious alien ship left orbit for Earth
- The symptoms of the virus are identical to the plague that struck the homeworld of one of the characters.
- Pirates are overhead discussing the coming raid on Spacestation Luxor
- Before the Starship crashes an unauthorised message is beamed from the ship to the colony world of Delta Vee

The Pursuit Encounters Complications

The players should have a clear sense of what they need to do at this point. They should have a clear direction which they are able to move decisively towards. And this is the point where things go terribly wrong. Maybe another group reveals itself with an attack. Maybe the apparently simple explanation of events is revealed to be deception.

Generally, either something about the pursuit creates a complication, such as an obstacle to bypass, or something external threatens the journey, such as an attack or a disaster. If this sounds a lot like Endangering the Characters, there's a reason for it. In fact, if the Endangering step was an attack, then the complication should be something environmental or other wise difficult to overcome. If the Endangering was environmental, then an attack might be appropriate. Basically, your goal here is to provide a different type of challenge, to allow different characters to shine.

This is also an opportunity to complicate the plot. If there's some other element you want to include, now's your chance. Some traditional complications

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include new characters on the scene, such as new villains, old enemies, or even rivals pursuing the same goal. Others include a double cross by allies, a loss of supplies or equipment, or another problem demanding attention that conflicts with the issue at hand, leading the characters to a tough decision.

If the complication turns the current course of action into a dead end, it's important that another action option suggests itself (after a suitable period of dramatic tension). Of course, that course of action may well pass through Certain Doom (see below).

Some Complications

- The Taurian system is currently off limits to non-military ships and so the characters will have to steal military ID codes for their ship.
- The alien ship left an attack satellite in orbit to deter pursuit
- The world is about to be quarantined by a ruthless naval commander
- The pirates have destroyed any spaceworthy ships and the characters will have to steal aboard one of the pirate vessels.
- Although the characters get the ship down safely it's no longer spaceworthy and the communication system is a wreck.

Certain Doom

Sometimes the complication gets worse, or it leads to another situation, or sometimes another situation entirely comes up. One way or another, the characters end up in a terrible situation, where it seems absolutely certain that the characters will perish. The classic example of this is the fiendish deathtrap, but it can really be anything that looks like certain doom. The whole point is to ratchet up the tension, get things to the point where it looks like there's no hope, and put the players on the edge of their seats.

Then you go get a drink.

Ok, maybe not, but it's kind of fun. You really do want to make the players sweat, so this is certainly time for a dramatic pause at the very least before they start desperately throwing around crazy plans for getting out. A short pause will give them time to discuss it and formulate a way out that utilises their many Skills and resources.

Some Dooms

- Arriving in the Taurian system, the characters blunder in to a experimental weapons test, how will they escape the massive explosion?
- It's not just an attack satellite in orbit, it's a killer satelite – once it target's the character's ship it will pursue them until it or they are so much space dust.
- The navy have already destroyed several ships trying to leave orbit for fear of the virus spreading
- The characters are caught trying to get aboard the pirate ship and are forced to fight a killer android as sport.
- The ship has crashed in a nest of alien creatures and it's driven them mad, they're tearing through the hull!

The Twist

The twist is a revelation that changes the understanding of the situation. The delivery of the twist can come in many forms. It can be simple information from a captured foe, released prisoner or even a gloating villain. Often, it flows from actions, like the arrival of an unexpected ally providing aid and information, or a villain's henchman turning against him at an opportune moment.

One bit of secret utility for the twist is that it can get you, the Story Teller, out of trouble. If your Certain Doom is looking a little too certain, or if there's an element of the story that got missed, now is your time to throw it in. If you discover things have gone too far off the tracks, this is your opportunity to say "Ha-ha, it was all a trick. This is what's actually going on!" Obviously this is a power to use sparingly, otherwise your players become skeptical of every plot, but it can really save you when the need arises.

The "twist" doesn't need to be too much of a twist. Its real role is a revelation, the final piece of the puzzle which makes the path to the final showdown crystal clear.

This should also be the point where the clock starts ticking. If the twist lets the players know what the villain's master plan is, but also leaves them feeling that they've got all the time in the world to deal with it, it will kill all the tension. As such, it is an important part of the revelation that time is running out.

Some Twists

- An alien cruiser suddenly decloaks and saves them by protecting their ship from the brunt of the blast. It turns out they're have been following the characters on the trail of the War Machines
- Defeating the killer satellite the characters discover clues to where the aliens came from in its programming
- A navy ship captain served with one of the characters in a Starblazer Legend and gives them a chance to escape
- The characters are able to re-program the killer robot to help them fight free
- A power source is discovered inside the alien's nest – it's an ancient Starship! Now all they have to do is fight their way through the swarm of creatures before their ship's power core explodes!

Final Showdown

There are a lot of ways to run the climactic fight scene, but there always needs to be something that sets it apart from just a normal fight scene. This may be some environmental element, something distinctive about the opposition, or almost anything else, all with the underlying tension of what happens if the players fail.

And there's the real kicker – in any other fight, there is a simple tension tied to the character's health, but the stakes are higher in the climax. If they lose, something specific and bad is going to happen, and it's going to be all their fault. No pressure though.

As a rule of thumb, you don't want the terrible thing to be the end of the world unless you're very confident in your players. Failure is not something we want to see happen, but most failures have the option of creating future adventures. If the mothballed War

Machine is activated despite the heroes' efforts, then it means that at some point there will be an adventure to stop the rampaging ancient weapon.

With the consequences in mind, it's time to get the ball rolling. Now, it's possible that the final showdown is some other sort of contest, like a race. If so, the tension is usually coming from the stakes. The only drawback with doing something other than a fight scene is that since this is the climax, everyone should have something to do, and more specialized scenes rarely allow this.

To spice up the fight it's time to look at your characters. At least a few of the opponents should be suited to the player's area of expertise. Remember we suggested you make a note of the characters Aspects and top Skills? This is where it comes in useful in your preparation for a game.

If you have a big, strong character, consider a big, strong opponent; if you have a flying character, consider a flying opponent or a target their need to attack from a fighter; and so on.

The tricky part of this is that you don't want to do that for every character all the time – otherwise it feels like Battle of the Doppelgangers. The best thing to do is look at the big challenge of the scene and figure which characters are most capable of handling it, and then come up for opposition for the people you feel will be a bit left out.

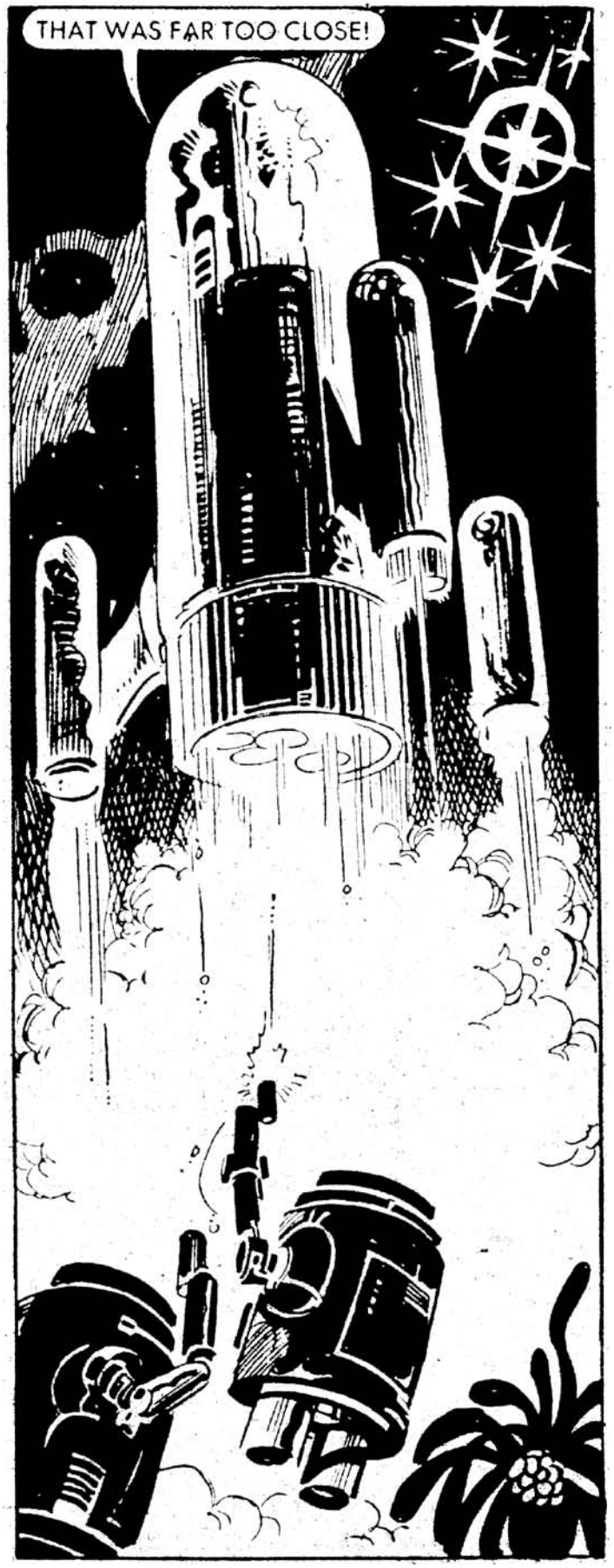
Here's a little bit of a trick: come up with a few more detailed opponents than you'll need. When you see how the fight is going, you can note which characters are at loose ends and zero in on them.

There are a few other tricks and traps to be aware of.

- If you have a big main villain, make sure he's not left in a situation where all the players can gang up on him, since he'll go down too fast. Give him minions, mobility or some other advantage that can be picked away at, so that he feels like a more substantial challenge.
- If you've got a massive threat or villain like a rampaging ancient war machine or a star monster all the characters will be fighting it or parts of it as described in Chapter 15 – Star Monsters & War Machines.
- Use the environment to kill off Extra's you don't want to track any more. If the characters nail a guy hard enough that one more hit will drop him, rather than just keep him around for bookkeeping purposes, have him be the guy who falls into the plasma reservoir or is eaten by the pursuing creature. It emphasizes the dangers of the environment and saves you headaches. It also establishes precedent for when the main villain takes a similar plunge later.
- Try not to kill any important character, be they player characters or Extras, 'onscreen'. Characters coming back from certain doom is a staple of space opera, so such questionable deaths are to be expected.
- Whatever reason required the players to get to the showdown in a hurry can still be in effect. Adding a countdown happening during an existing fight can raise the tension drastically. However, it can also trap you. The last thing you want is a literal countdown, since the numbers are a fixed effect. Instead you want to have physical cues that indicate that things are getting worse. Oxygen levels dropping aboard a ship, metal supports warping, exploding scenery, and so on. These sorts of cues allow the Story Teller to dramatically indicate things are getting worse, but without nailing yourself to a specific timeframe.

Some Final Showdowns

- One of the vast ancient War Machines is slowly pulling itself free from centuries of growth covering the crash site on the forest moon. As each new weapon or arm is freed it will get stronger and more dangerous. The characters join forces with the alien ship to defeat the machine whilst it is still vulnerable
- The characters must catch the alien ship and destroy it before it can cause the violent storms to wreak havoc on Earth.
- The character must race to a world that suffered the first outbreak and find a cure to bring back before the trigger happy navel commander kills more people.
- With the killer robot at their side the character fight their way through the pirates to confront the Pirate Lord.
- Fighting their way through the swarm of creatures they must face the creatures hive mind queen which attacks with strange mental powers.



Breakneck Escape

Not every game will include a breakneck escape. Traditionally, it's that flight for life as the enemy's headquarters blow up behind you or the volcano erupts. How necessary it is for the story has a lot to do with how exciting the climax was. If everyone clearly had a good time with the climax, then the escape can pretty much get hand-waved. If there's a little more excitement to be squeezed out of the evening, then some attention should be spent on the escape.

A good, convincing escape can be hard to run, simply because this is a stupid place to kill a character. Instead, you need to put something else at risk, so there is a possibility of loss without killing off a character. Escape should be dangerous, but the real danger should be to the thing or person they are taking with them.

Example Escapes

Note that there are fewer example escapes than other scenes, because many of the climaxes didn't demand an escape.

- The War Machine collapses back in to the hole from which it emerged, triggering a massive detonation of its weapons pile. With the alien ships' shields down the characters and aliens must escape in their ships before the blast front catches them
- As the Pirate Lord dies he triggers the ship's self destruct and the characters must race for the lifepods, through desperate packs of pirates and reach them before they're all gone.
- Having made it to the relative safety of the ancient alien ship the characters must figure out how to get it airborne and escape before the treacherous sabatoeurs arrive and kill the only witnesses to their crime.

Wrapping Up

Once you've finished the session, wrap up should be brief, but should make it clear that the characters' heroism is appreciated and that they made a real difference. The rewards of *Starblazer Adventures* don't have to be money, but it's not purely in the moral satisfaction either. Not every adventure ends in accolades, but if it's appropriate, make sure that the characters get recognized for their deeds. Typical rewards could include;

- Information – the next piece in the puzzle in the ongoing campaign or perhaps the secret weakness of the big Star Monster.
- A bonus to the next Resource Skill roll
- A piece of equipment for their ship (basically a Ship Skill at Average (+1)
- A new ally or companion for the group (see page 227)
- You could also reward the characters with advancement options – see Chapter 12

Pulling it all Together

Long as that explanation was, it's an easy model to apply. Just a line or two of notes for each element are enough to form the basic framework. And remember, just as you can have the player characters created on the fly, you can have your villains created on the fly, too – just write down a few key points like a positive and negative Aspect, couple of key Skills and don't sweat the details until you need them. See Chapter 33 – Monsters, Minions & Mad Scientists for a few nasty beasties and villains we prepared earlier!

So What's Wrong With It?

Having this sort of structure easily on hand is a useful tool. But it can also be a pain. A planned plot is only useful so far as you can get the players to buy into it. Continuing to stick to a plot after it's gone off the rails can lead to a host of problems, not the least of which are frustration and boredom. Sometimes you get it wrong and the players just don't enjoy the adventure you've thrown at them, they start to explore side plots and you should be ready to pick up on these clues. Don't be too precious about your ideas – that amazing adventure will always be there if they decide they want to pursue it.

Structured plots are a good place to start... But to really shine, you've got to learn the skills of guided improvisation. If you're not in to checking out a drama group and picking up some improvisational skills, this is where our next method comes in.

Improvising Like a Pro

So the players are eagerly stumbling through your prepared adventure. Suddenly, after an hour of the players just being there, the structure of your plot is shot into so many pieces that you don't recognize what's going on anymore. It apparently doesn't matter that the session you planned is just that damn good – sometimes things just don't fall your way.

When structure fails you, it can be useful to step back and think of the game as the story of the characters. That seems simple enough, but consider the implication: just like the protagonists of a book or movie, the most interesting story is wherever *they* are, and is the story best suited to *these* characters in particular.

You'll find improvisation gets easier with every game and especially improvising story elements that fit with what the character's would like to see. The real trick is working this out and still surprising them with an enjoyable experience. Don't be afraid to make mistakes though. This isn't a royal performance, remember you're just playing a game with some friends.

Fortunately, your players have already given you tools to make it easy for you to determine what needs to be important in an adventure, what they want to see in the game, what to hang and hook conflicts around, and what elements you can include to make them feel like the story belongs to them.

These tools are called Aspects and Skills. Your players put them on the character sheet for a reason. Remember we said to make a note of their top Skills and their Aspects? Now it's definetly time for you to use them if you've not done so already.

Basic Assumptions

This approach requires a few basic assumptions on your part as the Story Teller, so let's get them out of the way now:

- It is not necessary for you to know how anything is going to turn out for you to run a good session, and in fact, better stories can (and often do) result when you have no preconceived ideas. This includes the outcome of any conflict or decision the players make, what scene is going to conclude the adventure, and everything in between. Cooperative effort will be necessary to make the thing work. That's good.
- Players have chosen certain Skills either because they felt they needed them or because they wanted them and would like to be able to use them through the game.
- The use of Aspects, whether to invoke or compel, is one of the key methods in this game to add "weight" to any decisions made, and

is therefore one of the key methods to create drama and tension during play.

- The more that a given session of play involves moments where Aspects are invoked or compelled in response to or because of a decision, the more inherently interesting it is. Play is boring when nothing is really at stake.
- Whatever the players are interested in is more important and better than anything you came up with. If your ideas are so good that player input ruins them, you should be writing novels instead of playing roleplaying games.
- None of these principles should be applied in extremes. If you do have some kind of great idea to throw into the adventure, you can probably work it in so long as it doesn't violate any of the suggestions above.

Making the Plot

When you're making an adventure up this way, you're not going to be making up an entire plot. You may have a firm idea about how you want to kick things off, but after that, you need to be prepared for the adventure to branch off in any number of directions.

What you do need to do, however, is pick the Aspects on each of the player's sheets that you want to meaningfully incorporate into the adventure. These Aspects, once you select them, are going to form the basis for your adventure's focus – they'll determine what the central adventure seed is, what types of decisions the players will have to make, and what context you can draw from when you have to pull things out of thin air.

Decision Points

So, now you know the core of the adventure. What's next? The next step is to take the elements you thought up and structure them into decision points. These points will focus around an open-ended choice that can't be ignored and will push the action in a certain direction. The decision points should make use of the seed material. Be sure to keep most of them flexible enough that they could be introduced into the adventure at any time, and don't predetermine any outcomes.

Here are some more, off the top of your genius head:

- Pirates raid an orbital city, when the characters are present undercover. They get involved in a firefight with security and start wreaking havoc. Do the characters intervene? Security will probably be able to handle it themselves, and it'd keep them in a low profile, but some people could die and Security would likely take away all the evidence of the attack. If the characters fight the pirates directly, they could potentially get in trouble for any collateral damage, and it would inform the villain that the characters are on board.. This is the kind of scene that's great to open an adventure.
- The characters discover that the research company the mad scientist is getting technical equipment from is also involved in humanitarian efforts, providing certain important pharmaceuticals to hospitals in need. If an Extra is involved in helping them get this info, he or she will beg the characters not to make the company's involvement public, claiming that there was no way the company could know better. Can the characters afford to implicate the company if it means that they could get shut down? Can they risk being caught if they selectively alter the evidence? Is that justice?
- The villain offers to demand something of great value to a character (perhaps relevant to another Aspect) as part of his ransom, and he genuinely doesn't want to see what the full potential of his Robot Guards are – he's just a businessman, and he wants his money. He is genuine about his offer, and will accede to demands from the characters if they leave him and his ransom demand alone. The mad scientist may have other plans, so it'll still come to a showdown, but it gives the player a chance to decide whether or not his character really does have a price...what if the scientist can cure his wife or provide a cure to the plague ravaging his homeworld?

What Happens in Play

So there it is – all the material you need for a successful night's adventuring. Start with an opening scene, get into a decision point, and run whatever scenes are necessary to explore the consequences of the choices made. Mix more decision points in whenever you need to and continue improvising from them, and you're guaranteed at least a whole evening

of play. Even better, because those scenes all rebound off decisions the characters have made, the session will definitively be "about" them in a way that no preplotted adventure structure can be, even at its most flexible. Because you have nothing predetermined, the outcomes will surprise and entertain you, and the stories will be full of unexpected character development and thematic weight.

JAWS OF DEATH
ON CONTROL WHEEL Z409 THE DUTY CONTROLLER WAS IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE FREIGHTER, SILVER LADY.
Z409 TO SILVER LADY. YOUR COURSE IS 7N240.1. SPEED IS WARP 3. SOLAR STORMS, FORCE 3 PREDICTED FOR SECTION X24.3.

Getting Decision Points into Scenes

So this is all well and good, but how do you introduce new decision points into play? If you're chaining a whole group of scenes off of one decision, do you need to introduce more if there's a good momentum going?

Emphatically, *no you don't*. Don't get married to the idea of including everything you've come up with in the session – a lot of decision points you come up with may be rendered irrelevant by the action of play or simply be extraneous in the middle of all the action you have going on. Often, with a proactive group, you may only need one or two major decisions per character to fill the night with scenes.

In the end, *Starblazer Adventures* is about action. If you have action going on, roll with it! But, if the pace starts to flag or the events of the first decision point resolve more quickly than you expected, introduce a new one. The easiest way to do this is through Extras – no matter what, people will always respond to people better than they'll respond to other stimuli. People the character is connected to, with a strong need and the will to pursue that need, are often all you require to push decision points. What if a character has a rivalry with a security trooper on the scene when the pirates attack? What if the person who wants to spare the research company is a friend of a character?

It also might help you to restructure more traditional adventure scene goals (break in here, defeat these guards, make this investigation roll, etc .) to be the beginning for a decision point scene instead of the end. Instead of spending all your time trying to figure out if the characters are going to get their hands on the smoking laser, drop it in their laps with one blaster charge left in it and a villain who just torched their friends/lovers/parents/children. Justice or vengeance?

That's the kind of pressure that will get you stories.

[*Chapter 27: Story Teller Twisted Tips*]▷

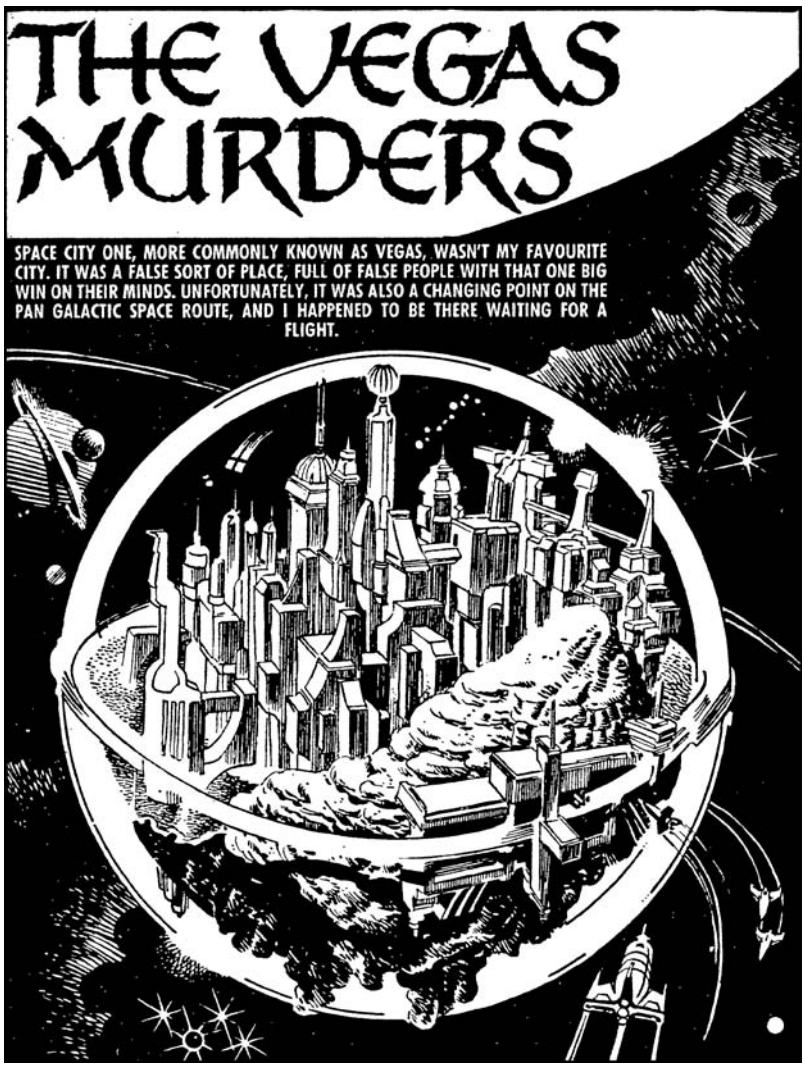
Another way of doing things: The Dynamic Game

The Dynamic game is a little looser than the Structured game from above, but it has a tighter framework and more narrative thrust (i.e., deliberate plot structure) than the game based on Aspects. Designing it is still pretty procedural, but it depends a lot on the Story Teller being able to set the balls in motion, and keep track of where they go. You could use the random plot generator in Chapter 25 to give you some of the key elements below.

Set Up the Board

Step One: What is the Hook?

A dynamic game begins with a central hook. It might be a thing, like a valuable treasure or ancient secret. It could be a person, like a traveling trillionaire, a famous star or a brilliant scientist. It might even be a place, like a space station, as it's opened by the president, or an old Starship junk yard. What it is doesn't matter, what does matter is what people want with it.


THE VEGAS MURDERS
SPACE CITY ONE, MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS VEGAS, WASN'T MY FAVOURITE CITY. IT WAS A FALSE SORT OF PLACE, FULL OF FALSE PEOPLE WITH THAT ONE BIG WIN ON THEIR MINDS. UNFORTUNATELY, IT WAS ALSO A CHANGING POINT ON THE PAN GALACTIC SPACE ROUTE, AND I HAPPENED TO BE THERE WAITING FOR A FLIGHT.

Step Two: Who Wants It?

The next thing you need is an Extra. The best choice for the first Extra is the character you expect to be the villain. That character has an interest in the hook. Maybe they want to steal it, maybe they want to destroy it. The why, will be answered in the next question.

"Who" does not always need to be one person. It may be a group, such as an organization, or perhaps an interested individual and his lieutenant. These secondary characters usually are just extensions of the motives of the main character.

Step Three: What is He Going to Do With It?

Ask yourself, if no-one got in the way, and nothing went wrong, what is the Extra going to do with the hook? What's their plan?

Bear in mind, when you answer this question, you're really looking in the medium term. In the short term, they'll be doing whatever they can to get (or protect or destroy or eat or whatever) the hook, and in the long term, they'll have applied whatever it is they did with the thing and started using it towards their ultimate goal. The medium term plan is what they're going to have to do to bridge that gap.

Note, sometimes what the character plans and what the actual consequences are not the same thing in all cases. Rebels stealing something dangerous to sell, but instead accidentally activating an ancient weapon, is a great example of how this can go wrong.

Notice that because plans are medium term, the result is very rarely something so extreme as "and then I rule the galaxy". Instead, it focuses on a step in the process towards ruling the galaxy.

Step Four: Is That Enough?

If you think you've got enough to start things going, then rock on. If not, go back to step two

and come up with a new Extra, and answer questions two and three. Keep doing this until you feel you have a sufficiently dynamic situation and a clear picture of what's going on. You can do this to come up with some other parties – maybe several different groups or individuals want the hook for their own reasons and so the characters can get caught in the crossfire.

In these subsequent steps, take a moment to consider the characters' Aspects. If they have any Aspects for appropriate Extras, this is a great time to bring them in. Barring that, take a look over the Aspects and see if you can bring in Extra's whose plans or motives are going to fit with those Aspects.

Look at the Big Picture

Once you've complicated the mix enough, you should have several potentially competing threads. Each participant has their own goal, and it's very unlikely that they can all get what they want. At the same time, the competing goals should suggest a matrix for how the story would work itself out if no one else got involved. Stop and take a moment to think about how you would see this playing out if the players never got involved.

Get the Ball Rolling

Once you've looked at the big picture, it should suggest the direction the narrative is going at the point when the players get involved. Figure out where the players enter into the situation, and then simply start having events play out. When players do take action, consider the consequences of their actions, and whether or not it increases the likelihood of one or another of the desired outcomes.

Players may end up supporting one of the Extra's goals, but the Story Teller needs to be prepared for them bringing the situation to an entirely different conclusion.

Plan It Out

Give a little bit of thought to the likeliest outcomes. You're not obliged to make any of these happen, but these are the things the Extras will be actively working to make happen, so there should at least be a decent chance of it occurring.

Sketch It Out

If it makes it easier, imagine the hook as a small sphere. Each interested Extra has an arrow running through the sphere from their name to their goal. With multiple hooks in play, each character may have multiple arrows. Use this map to keep you aware of what's going on with the characters you bring into a scene at any point.

Play It Out

You've thought it through enough. Now *play it!*

Was it Enough?

Ok, so, the pacing didn't go quite right, and you finished the first chain of events too quickly. You need to do more and you need to do it quickly. No problem at all! Start with the goal that was successfully achieved, whatever it was – that is the new hook. Some of the same characters are probably still interested, but some will probably have dropped off the map. Replace them with new interested parties until you've rebuilt the model. With a few minutes' break, you should be ready to go all over again. Alternatively during preparation come up with some alternative groups or individuals that you can use to throw in at moments like these. This will save downtime during the actual game which is always a good thing.

It doesn't hurt to think about these potential outcomes, but don't get too attached. The one thing they don't account for is the goal achieved by the characters if they do something entirely unexpected. Thankfully, the same model can be used: look at what the characters accomplished, and use it as the hook for the next setup.

Expanding and Contracting the Model

It's worth noting that this tends to assume complex, multi-motivational situations. That's great for establishing things, but as you move out to secondary hooks, feel free to loosen up a bit, and make the sole obstacle to the goal something simple, like an old Starship full of death traps.

Alternately, you can complicate the path to the hook. If the hook is not immediately accessible, interested parties may need to go through one or more intervening steps before they can interact with the hook. For example, there may be a alien ruin deep in the jungle as the hook for multiple groups, but there are still the dangers of the jungle to get through before that is ever an issue. This allows you to combine the dynamic factors coming from active, agenda driven Extras with more traditional problems.

[*Chapter 27: Story Teller Twisted Tips*]▷

The Bottom Line

Each of these approaches to running a pickup game have been presented to you in a pure form – and you could certainly pick any one choice and run a great, solid game using it. But your real ninja power as a Story Teller is going to come from putting all of them in a big blender and turning it on to puree.

The Improvised game provides a good, default set of bones for any adventure. This makes it the ideal fall-back position if the other two strategies are running dry on you. And any dynamic pickup game is going to be stronger if you work your Aspect based decision points into it.

Think of this as a hammer, screwdriver, and wrench. Each tool has a particular function that it's especially good at, but without all three, your toolbox just isn't complete.

Keeping it Space Opera

Space Opera is exactly the right kind of genre for these style of adventures because it's so simple. Good is generally good, bad is generally bad, and everything else is science and good intentions. Evil can be defeated with determination, a fully charged blaster and two swinging fists.

This isn't to say your adventure scenarios can't have some complexity here and there – everyone loves a good mystery now and again – but space opera really starts to sing when it builds a kind of crazy, tumbling-ever-forward momentum. A good game session should leave the players feeling like they were desperately scrambling all over the surface of some monolithic vehicle hurtling with great determination at a very tall, very unsympathetic wall – and managed, somehow, to pull it all together at the last minute.

To say it another way, great space opera games are nearly always some kind of a race – against a clock, against distance, against an opponent. Everything is in motion, and conclusions – coming right at you – are inevitable. When your players cross the finish line, it should be with the same panting elation of a runner who came in first by the skin of his teeth thanks to a desperate last-minute sprint.

Some Story Tellers can manage this just by exercising the techniques they've already honed, but many of us are not so blessed. This chapter's already

given a number of ideas for how to run your game such that you'll have room to create the kind of experience we're talking about. Here we'll focus on techniques that directly address the idea of the "race".

Staying Action-Orientated

Starblazer Adventures is all about action, fast and furious. Here's a few ways to keep things moving.

Put Them on the Clock

There's nothing like a clock for keeping your game flying. You've already got one clock going – the length of real time for the session. You should already have a concern for making sure that you pack in enough events and interest in the bounds of that clock's timeframe, but here, we're talking about something else.

We're talking, instead, about the in-game clock – something which the characters should always hear ticking away over their shoulder, hounding them. In-game time pressure is vital to encouraging an ongoing action atmosphere. No situation that needs the players to act should come up without having some sort of time limit on it before dire consequences shall befall the dawdler. Such as escaping the pirate lord's ship before it falls in to the sun.

As a Story Teller you should move quickly to renew the tension of the ticking clock whenever the players relax. The tension in a dramatic scene should never fall slack; if it does – put them on the clock!

Provide Plenty of Cues and Clues

You may think you've given the players all the clever hints and subtle cues necessary to solve the riddle and get to the heart of the matter … but they're sitting there looking unsure of what to do, or asking all the questions that *aren't* on target. The game is, in essence, paralyzed. Why did it happen?

Unfortunately, it's likely you only have yourself to blame. If all those questions the players are asking are off-target, it's very likely because you didn't make the target big enough. If they're sitting around and unsure of what actions they can or should take, you probably didn't give them enough cues as to what their options are.

We're not saying that you shouldn't leave the field open for players to pursue whatever agendas they want to – because after all the characters are the big focus of the game. But when players stop having somewhere to go (and whether or not that's true from *your* perspective is irrelevant if it's effectively true from *theirs*), it's because you didn't show them what the destinations were. *Show them*.

Space opera plots have a certain *inevitability* baked right in. This is *not* the same as saying they're built to "railroad" the players. Rather, each step that is taken should naturally reveal the shape of the next ones available. In a vacuum, players will follow that shape, so long as it's clear enough to be recognizable.

If you're putting together a mystery in a space opera game, for example, then you *must* make sure that there's more than one way to solve it. You should also exercise a broad tolerance for wacky solutions that the players come up with (but we'll get more into that below), or letting them pursue some side-threads before getting back to the main one (if it seems to be dragging the game off course, however, make sure you've put the main thread *on the clock*, as above).

This goes back to what we said just a little bit earlier. The targets you put into the story need to be big enough – big enough to be noticed and to suggest a course of action, and big enough to be hit if someone's trying to come at it from any number of directions. Paralysis arises from a simple lack of the obvious. Don't be *afraid* of the obvious – it's part of pulp. *Provide plenty of cues and clues*, and your players will move ever forward.

Embrace Crazy Plans and Schemes

"A good plan, violently executed now, is better than a perfect plan next week." – General George Patton

The General may as well have been talking about space opera when he said that. Players are going to be more likely to take an action-oriented approach if they feel like they aren't going to be penalized for less-than-perfect plans. Be understanding of flaws and be willing to gloss over them in the interests of fun and entertainment.

Even if you can see several holes in a plan, don't go taking advantage of those holes right off. Villains can have blind spots; they're not perfect either. Jeopardize the holes, certainly, to increase the drama, but don't go after them to the point of unraveling the plan. If it's even halfway decent (and especially if it's violent or involves characters taking some kind of crazy risk), then it's going to make for a solid, entertaining element of the story. Support their plan – like it – and be glad to be a part of it!

Encourage Action over Contemplation

Sitting around and thinking about things can be the death of space opera. The characters are men and women of action in a universe of danger!

This is not to say that characters shouldn't get the opportunity to talk their way out of a situation, use diplomacy or sneak in to a fortress. The world of space opera is also the land of strange technologies that need examining, alien inscriptions that need deciphering, and powerful delegates that need schmoozing. But each of those is only half of a space opera situation, never its whole. Strange technologies that need examining *can come to life, attacking all in the lab!* Indecipherable inscriptions that need deciphering *unlock lost alien cities full of death traps!* And powerful delegates that need schmoozing are *the targets of sinister assassins!*

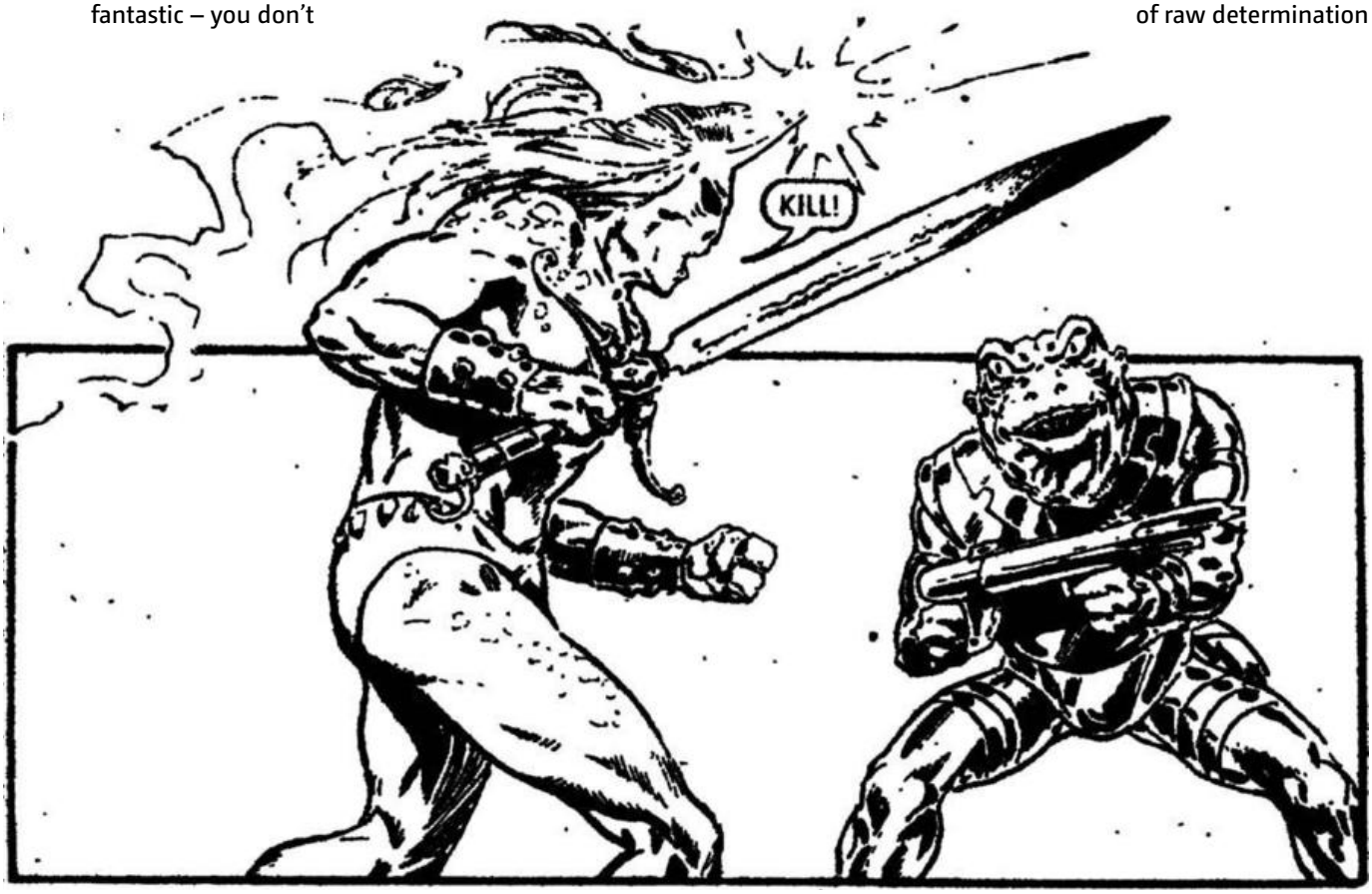
Dropping action into the middle of an otherwise contemplative scene can liven up the game, keeping things jumpy and in motion. Don't be shy about doing it. But *do* be shy about doing it when characters are interacting with each other excitedly. The idea here is to *encourage* action over contemplation – not to mandate it. A good social scene where everyone's chewing the scenery is fantastic – you don't want to nip that in the bud by any means. What you *do* want to prevent is the spiral from that point towards things which are less interesting. Stay sensitive to the nature and pace of the conversation, and when it starts slowing down, make sure that action awaits.

If the players have created characters who are eminent scholars and scientists, or people well-connected in the halls of power, they should get every chance to make use of those Skills. But these sorts of examinations, discoveries, and conversations should be abbreviated where possible, and should *always* give quick rise to potentials for action. They can be the glue that holds together two pieces of action, but without those two pieces, they are glue best kept in the bottle.

It boils down to this: when in doubt, *Encourage action over contemplation.*

Allow Two Fists & A Blaster To Solve The Problem

Part and parcel of accepting the action principle of space opera is embracing the idea that two swinging fists (and a Starship full of raw determination



and good intent) are enough to get through just about any situation. In space opera, violence *works* as a solution.

Some of this idea overlaps with the *action over contemplation* principle. If someone is struggling with something that requires thought or social interaction, it's appropriate to give them something they can smash to get their answers (provided that the group is otherwise stymied with the less violent approaches). This also means that the characters shouldn't face problems that are impossible to fight. Space opera is simple, and occasionally players will want to dive into the simplest solutions, and hitting something until it stops doing the bad thing is really, elementally simple.

There are, of course, complications to this. Should you allow a gun fight to solve the problem of the snooty admiral? Well, no (even if it does make the character feel better). What we're talking about here is the use of fists (and blasters and energy swords) against the *big* problems of the adventure. If a giant monster is trying to eat your Starship, you *can* fight it to solve the problem. If a vastly powerful scientists has run off with your girlfriend and plans to use alien technology to siphon off her life force – your blasters *will* be proof against his evil.

In space opera, when the cards are down, and the big doom is upon us, violence doesn't lead to violence – violence leads to victory. *Allow two fists and a blaster to solve it!*

When All Else Fails...Send in the Ninjas

Games will inevitably stagnate at some point or another, no matter how much effort is put into heading off that undesirable eventuality. Leads will get exhausted, players will get frustrated with puzzles, and nobody will come up with a good, crazy plan to save the day. There's only one thing you could possibly do in such a situation.

Send in the ninjas. Seriously. Send in the ninjas. Well they are more likely to be alien insects, pirate raiders, rogue battle robots....

Firstly, a good sudden explosion of violence gives you time, as a Story Teller, to think, and gives everyone else something to do too, what with all the blaster shots, plasma grenades, energy swords and kung-fu fists flying at their heads.

Secondly, the 'ninjas' will inevitably fall before the heroic deeds of the player characters, and then they'll have someone to interrogate. By this time you'll have used the combat time to figure out where to send the players next.

It's worthwhile preparing some suitable minions or ninja's types before the game session so you've always got some ready to throw at the players. If you're stuck just pick some from Minions lists in Chapter 33 rather than take too much time out during a game.

Naturally, the captured ninja in question will only offer enough information after a good Intimidate roll (okay, if you're at this point, really, any Intimidate roll) to point the characters as to where and what to do next, before the explosive bolt in his head activates and kills him, or a more talented villain nearby takes him out with a sniper rifle, but by that time, he's said enough, and the game is back on a roll.

But beware! Use the power of the ninjas carefully. There *is* such a thing – though we know you may doubt it! – as *too many ninjas*. Overuse of this technique leads to players getting wise to it real fast, and one too many fights of this nature can start to feel like hollow or meaningless victories. Try the other things we've talked about first, but when all else fails... send in the ninjas.

More Subtle Ninjas

There's one trick to remember with the ninjas, or whatever else you send in. Players can get pretty accustomed to threats to themselves. Nothing is more frustrating than having some gun toting minions come in through the door, get creamed, and have the players go back to studying their navels.

When this is a concern, the trick is to have the ninjas bust in *on someone else*! The players may be blasé about attacks on themselves, but if the ninjas attack the old man who runs the landing field where their ship is parked that's suddenly a challenge and a mystery! Can they save the guy in time? And even if they can, why are ninjas after him?

Have a look at some of the minions suggested in Chapter 33 Monsters, Minons & Mad Scientists for ideas of some typical 'ninjas' you could throw at your players.

Good Cliché, Bad Cliche

There's a hearty embrace of cliché which, while not necessary, can go a long way to making an adventure feel like it's a "space opera" adventure. One thing you can do to help this out is to add a twist.

Once you've thought up a reasonable explanation for events, add one more layer. Don't make things more complicated. Instead, make them more colorful. If your story involves pirates, consider making them robot pirates, kung fu aliens, aliens with freeze rays, robots led by a half man half robot, or anything else that comes to mind. In most games, you would not want to overuse this sort of thing, but for space opera, it's encouraged.

Extra's on the Fly

When you need to introduce a new character, simply start with a blank character sheet and fill in a few critical pieces of data – their best Skill, the Aspects that jump out at you as most important – and leave the rest blank. When a situation arises where the Extra needs to roll a Skill or use an Aspect you haven't written down, go ahead and write it down in one of the blank slots, then roll appropriately. This results in Extra's getting fleshed out over time without needing to invest a lot of time or effort up front.

Remember if you've got a big organisation like an empire worked out using the Star Empire's rules in Chapter 16 you can use the organisation's Arms Skill as the highest Skill rating of its minions – whether they're fighters, pirate attack ships or robot guards.

Deathtraps and Other Dooms

Sometimes the characters will be faced with situations where the potential for a lethal outcome is clear - fights on the edge of a bottomless chasm, crossing a battlefield amidst giant war machines letting rip with massive weapons, trapped in a battleship diving in to a sun– that sort of thing. Certainly, if the character were to fall into the chasm, get hit by a giant weapon, or be caught in the Starships firey death, it would be the end for them.

As a rule of thumb, try to never put a character in a situation where it is "make this roll or die". Instead, have the threat affect the contest in other ways – a giant robot foot landing nearby should scatter the combatants, not decimate them. A nearby hazard like a bottomless crevasse provides color to descriptions, and is best used as an Aspect for the scene.

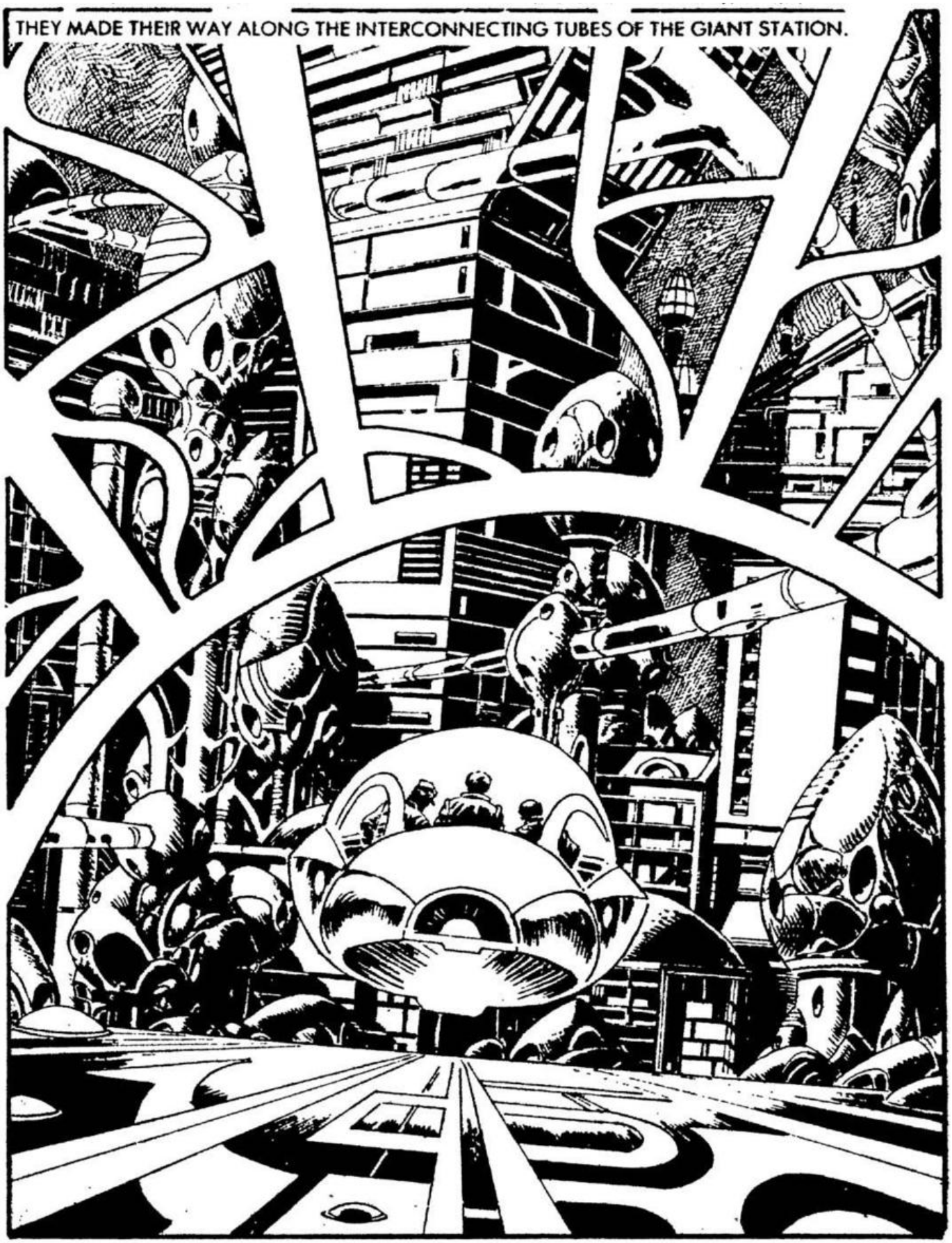
All that said, while you should go out of your way to try to keep these things from bringing about an arbitrary death, sometimes characters do die, and when that time comes, let it happen with dignity, and help the player get his next character started as quickly as possible. A little heartless? Yes, but it's necessary – if death is entirely impossible, the game shifts from space opera to being just a cartoon.

Testing the Breeze

When you tell a player to pick up the dice, you're basically saying that something is about to happen and often this is far more important than the result of the dice roll. These are situations were you could just tell the player that they see something, but by first calling for an Alertness or Starship Pilot or other roll, you capture their attention. Generally, you can use their roll to indicate how to twist the description. If they roll badly, perhaps something goes wrong, or you couch the information in very obscure terms. If they roll very well, you're welcome to throw in some extra detail, which may be a clue, or may just be a bit of extra flourish.

For example Brandon Carter is driving his Patrol Cruiser down the mega highway on the trail of a killer mandroid who's driving a red cruiser. The Story Teller asks Brandon to make an Alertness Skill check. Brandon rolls well and the Story Teller tells him he saw a smear of red paint on a slip road – the mandroid must have grazed the cruiser against the wall, and Brandon managed to swerve off the highway just in time. If Brandon had barely made the roll, he might have spotted the paint but not in time to take the slip road, he'd have to get off at the next exit or call for back up.

One important qualifier on testing the breeze – sometimes players will look at a bad roll and feel they need to use Aspects or Fate points to bump it up. You can discourage them, a simple "Don't worry about it, I was just checking something" will often suffice. If you don't want to discourage them, however, take it as a reminder that you need to create an opportunity for that character to earn that FP back as soon as possible. Equally so, don't ask them to make a roll if it has no meaning, it just slows the game down. In general use Skill checks to keep the pace, raise the tension and drive the story forward.


THEY MADE THEIR WAY ALONG THE INTERCONNECTING TUBES OF THE GIANT STATION.

Controlling Perspective

Not every Story Teller realizes the importance of controlling the audience's (i.e., the players') perspective in a game, but it's just as important in a roleplaying game as it is in a movie or TV show. What you show the players, how you show it to them, when you show it to them, and what you don't show are all key components in building excitement and story.

The questions of how to manage perspective are nothing short of vital. Here, we'll give you some answers.

Scene Framing

If you've ever played a roleplaying game before, you've framed a scene without thinking about it. Even if you've never played a roleplaying game before, you'll frame a scene without thinking about it. The fact that we give it a formal title may disguise how common it is – **scene framing** is merely what you do when you decide when a scene starts and stops, where it happens, and who's involved in it. Every time a Story Teller says, "So you're all sitting in the Starport bar when..." or "So now you get to the villain's secret bunker..." they're framing a scene. It's as simple as establishing the transition for the next piece of game action. The easiest comparison to make is to a film editor, who routinely cuts scenes off and begins others. That's scene framing, and everyone does it whether or not they realize it.

So, why point it out? Because *mindful* scene framing is a Story Teller's primary tool to establish pace in a session of play, *especially* in a pickup game. When the pace is flagging, it's the Story Teller's responsibility to focus everyone on the game and frame the next scene, to keep things moving along as they should in a space opera game, where the action is fast and the "camera" isn't willing to focus too long on a particular subject if it no longer serves a purpose in play. This can be a rocky road to walk sometimes – one or all of the players may truly enjoy going through all the minute details of their characters' shopping trips for better equipment. You're going to have to cater to those preferences, if the whole group exhibits them. If they don't, however, you're going to have to take those rolling eyes as a sign that you need to be proactive about framing scenes. How will you know when to move things? Look no further than the next few paragraphs.

Starting Things Off

When you frame the beginning of a scene, you're typically going to want to start it just before an important piece of action (not necessarily violence) is going to take place. If the characters are going to the villain's secret asteroid base, you don't want to start describing events in the scene from the moment they leave their Star Patrol office unless something important is going to occur then. If Brandon is waiting for a contact to arrive at a rendezvous, you don't want to start the scene two hours before the contact shows up as he works out which type of coffee to order. This may seem like common sense advice, but it's something that can trip people up on the fly – it's easy to fall into a pattern of narrating every block of time the characters spend in play without realizing and chomping up game time with "okay, so you leave the store and start heading back home, and you're walking down..." kind of material. Keep an eye out for it and cut when necessary to save yourself idle time. If need be cut to other players in the group who might be involved in something more exciting and then return to the player when he or she gets where they need to be.

When a Scene is No Longer a Scene

How do you know when it's time to move on? Well, just about every scene you could envision has a purpose, a moment where you can definitively say that the *point* of the scene has happened. Usually, this happens after the resolution of some kind of conflict, but that isn't always the case. If the characters are shopping for equipment, the scene's purpose is for the characters to find out whether or not they can acquire the gear they want. If they can (or can't), and they know it, the scene is over – whatever bickering Brandon Carter's player is doing with the sergeant in charge of stores can safely be glossed over. If the characters are trying to figure out the meaning behind an obscure puzzle left at a crime scene, the scene is resolved when they discover (or fail to discover) that clue. If the characters are in a fight, the scene is resolved when that fight's over and they figure out where to go from there.

Even in purely character-driven scenes, like when Drake's player wants a scene so he can fail to convince his pursuers how he really converted from being a criminal yet again, that time eventually comes. He's failed to say what he needs to say, probably milked

some Fate points out of the Story Teller for good roleplay, shown his true colors, and it's time to move on. Going into a scene, you have to ask yourself: What's the point? Why is this scene happening? And when that point occurs, whatever it is, close up loose ends and move on.

Making the Transitions

So you're sitting in play, the time has come to change scenes, and you're trying not to ruffle feathers when doing it. How do you frame a scene without abusing your power? How do you avoid stealing a player's thunder if he's riffing off some good roleplay?

Well, first rule of thumb is that if it looks like your players are getting into the action at hand, let 'em run with it. Unless you're totally strapped for time, letting the players revel in immersion or in a particular Aspect of the setting (no pun intended) isn't going to do your game any harm. Roll with what they give you. You may find your game enhanced by it. It may not be what you planned, but if they enjoy it, your gaming session is a successful one. And if the Extra's interactions are interesting enough, you can always take this as a cue to move decision points around to be initiated by different Extras. *Your* plans are the ones that need to be flexible.

The second rule of thumb is that when you're in doubt, just ask. Your players know you aren't a mind reader, and no rule in this book can substitute for honest, direct communication with them. You may be in a place where you're strapped for time and only have the length of one session to run your adventure. If that's the case, no one's going to begrudge you asking, "Hey, guys? Simon's got the equipment he wanted... can I go ahead and cut to the next scene?" If you have a player who *would* begrudge you asking that, it might be time to review his inclusion in your game.

The third rule of thumb is that if you feel the purpose of a scene has been fulfilled but you don't know what to transition to next, then turn to the players and ask them what they want to do. If you've set up your decision points right, or some player has a clear goal in mind, they're more than likely brimming with ideas about what scene they want to run next. All you have to do is solicit ideas, and you have an instant wealth of scenes you can possibly run.

The fourth rule of thumb is that if there's any dead air, do something. Are the players not talking anymore, looking at you expectantly or at random details of the room? More than likely, a scene's gone off its course. Do whatever you have to – bring in a new Extra encounter, start to frame a new scene, narrate two guys bursting through the airlock with energy swords – but under any circumstances, do not let dead air dominate your game time. Your time for making stories is valuable; make sure you make it count and they'll be back for more, and more.

Camera Work

When it comes right down to it, the Story Teller is the director for her game – or at least the *cinematographer* – and can deliberately control the "camera" through descriptive techniques. When they take control of the camera, they're saying to the audience, "Hey – look over here, right now!" This ability of the Story Teller is powerful, and if you juggle and tweak it just right, you can really drive up the excitement level of your game.

To pull off solid camera work, you need to picture yourself as the camera crew, a set of ghostly, invisible people placed within the scene. Each interesting thing in the scene should get a camera on it, and any given set of interesting things should contain all of the characters. If a player character is missing from the list, figure out why – it may be a warning sign that you haven't given them anything interesting to do (and, thus, there's nothing interesting to point a camera at around them). Come up with something interesting for them, and include them with a camera.

Sometimes even certain Extra's – usually the big villains of the piece – may get a camera as well, but we'll get into that a bit more in "Cut Scenes", below.

For example Brandon Carter is scaling the exterior of the battleship Drakon with his Star Patrol marines in assault armour whilst the Fi-Sci guys are fighting off the robot crew on board to give Astraade Menin time to hack in to the ships defence systems.

You could have one larger scene, but each camera's point of focus can be looked at a smaller, contained scene of its own. With this in mind, the Story Teller gets to control which camera is turned on, when. When they want to focus on what Brandon's doing, they can run a few exchanges' worth of Brandon struggling to make it past the ships's hull defences; when they want to watch the Fi-Sci team holding off the robot guards or Astraade desperately hacking the strange alien computer they can do much the same.

In situations like these, it's important to make sure that each camera gets a healthy chunk of screen time. To put it another way, each camera should get roughly the same amount of time and attention. Here, we're talking more about *real time* than in-game time – there's no formula of exchanges-per-camera to be had. Further, with multiple cameras, the length of real time each camera is "on" should be kept short – a few minutes, perhaps, but not much more than five (or *maybe* eight or ten).

This sort of camera work should be active and deliberate. Think about the angle something would best be filmed at, and describe it from that perspective. Taking the role of the camera man, talk about zooming in on particular details, pulling back to reveal a vaster whole, or panning over to a new, sudden development. You can even use this method to describe transitions from one camera to the next, showing how the smaller scenes are connected inside of the larger whole.

Nearly always, if an exchange has ended on something that would make a good short-term cliff-hanger, it's time to cut over to the next camera. Other times, it may even be worth it to pause a camera in the *middle* of an exchange – say, after someone's made a bad roll – in order to raise the tension.

Bringing this sort of description into full form can give players the immersive sense of starring in a movie, and can go a long way to holding their attention even when it's not their camera that's turned on.

Blam! The last of Fi-Sci team are taken down by the ruthless robot warriors aboard the ship and Astraade makes a last desperate Skill check to hack in to the ship's system before they get to him, and rolls badly! Now our camera rockets through the ship passing hordes of battle hungry robots heading towards Astraade and emerge through the hull by Brandon. Can he and the marines make it to the bridge's airlock in time? Come on!

OPERATION OVERKILL
ORBITING THE RED STAR LUYTEN 726-8A WAS THE EARTH ALLIANCE'S GIANT TOP SECURITY PRISON. WITHIN ITS WALLS WERE SOME OF THE GALAXY'S MOST VICIOUS CRIMINALS. NO-ONE HAD EVER ESCAPED ITS CONFINES . . .

Solid camera work achieves two primary goals. First, it makes sure all your players get "spotlight" time. (This makes players happy, and happy players make a better game.) Second, it drives the pace of your game within the larger scene. In the end, the high action of space opera is only as exciting as how it is filmed. *Film it well*.

Cut Scenes

If you're particularly invested in making your game feel like a movie, consider the idea of using a cut scene. In this context, a cut scene is a short bit of narration by the Story Teller that follows what's going on with the Extra's *without* any of the characters present, while the player characters are off doing whatever it is they're doing.

Most cut scenes should *tease* about what the Extras are doing. For example, you could show two Extras having a conversation, but don't let it be too clear what the specific topic is. Other times, you may want to keep one of the Extras in the scene "off camera", but heard – and save

the revelation of his identity for when the characters actually encounter him or it.

Cut scenes also work well as an anticipation-building commentary on what the characters are doing. For example, when the PCs have just walked into a trap, consider doing a cut scene to the bad guy (ensconced elsewhere in his secret base) saying something sinister and pulling the lever that unleashes the hungry alien creatures. "He pulls the lever, cackling. Everyone roll Alertness!" They also work well as transitions from one player scene to the next, particularly if the characters are doing some lengthy travel in between actual on-screen scenes.

Finally, cut scenes can give the audience (your players) a nice view of a hated villain's demise when their characters aren't able to stay around to see it themselves (what with them not wanting a more personal demise experience). The sight of the master villain shouting "noooooooo!" as his creations rise up and destroy him, his Starship exploding all around, is the stuff of *satisfaction*. Provide it!

The main wrinkle with cut scenes is all about your comfort level, as a Story Teller, and your players' comfort level, with the ability to separate the "in character" stuff from the "out of character" stuff.

Cut scenes are there solely for the players' enjoyment – they provide no information to the characters, and the players shouldn't act on the information that *is* supplied. If you stick tightly to the recommendations above – in particular going for the tease and saving the revelation – you shouldn't run afoul of these issues that much (unless your players just plum don't like such scenes). But if you do have the kind of trust and comfort levels that let you reveal more, by all means, do so – provided you're sure you're keeping your players entertained. Avoid the temptation to hog the spotlight. Cut scenes are spice; they're not the main dish.

The Montage

Some Skills take a lot of time and their use is best described as a montage. A *montage* is a term from film that describes a series of short shots that collectively indicate time passing and a character or characters doing something. If you've ever seen a training montage in a film where the hero spends several quick scenes lifting weights, running up stairs, practicing under the sharp eye of his mentor, and at the end, he's mastered whatever he started working on, then you should have a good idea of how a montage should play out.

When you describe a character performing such a task, take a moment to describe a few key scenes, trying to visualize how this might be presented if the story were a movie. This gives an opportunity to give a little more color to long efforts, like researching and contacting.

For example winning the trust of the leader of the Catarian People's Front, Brandon and Astraade convince them to outfit their ship for the coming battle. This is a good opportunity for a montage of cranes dwarfing their ship, new engines or weapons being lowered in to gaping holes in the fuselage, testing out the new impellers on the fusion drives, installing the transmanic tracking device in the bridge, etc.

Information Management

Information management: what does that mean? Consider for a second that as a Story Teller, you know a *lot*. You've read the whole book, you've got some notes, you have solid ideas of what makes the various Extra's tick. You've got information that you probably haven't even thought about yet, that you just think of as logical extensions of what you know. As a Story Teller, one of your most important jobs is making sure that that information flows steadily towards the players – too little and they may grow frustrated, too much and they'll get overwhelmed.

The trick of this is that you need to control the quality of the information the players receive. This is partly about interest level – if you read a passage straight from a textbook, don't expect a lot of interest – but it is more about how you expect the information to be used. Practically speaking, there are two types of information, color and drama.

Colour

A lot of information is going to provide colour. Most descriptions and explanations are colour. Colour is most important in maintaining the feel of the world – if you don't provide things like descriptions, play begins to resemble little more than a board game. On the other hand, if there's any kind of information you're liable to provide too much of, it's probably going to be colour. There's no one way to do colour right, but there are a few guidelines.

B

Scenes

The first is to realize that people don't need all the details to fill in the appropriate ones. If you describe a narrow alley between two warehouses, a lot of players will fill in things like windows and fire escapes, maybe even trash cans and litter without you needing to describe "large windows high up on the walls, every twelve feet or so, and a rusty fire escape going up to the next floor".

Improvising Detail

Sometimes players will have a slightly different view of things than you. If this difference is drastic, it may result in them taking an action that doesn't entirely make sense. When this happens, just ask the player what they expect. If they're making an assumption that seems entirely unreasonable, you may need to discuss that with them, but if it's not unreasonable, then it's an excellent opportunity to suggest to the player that this would be a good use of the editing power of a Fate point (page 201). Usually, the player's expectations are more minor, and usually come in the form of "Is there a ladder here?" The answer to a question like that depends on your response. If you feel the answer is "yes", or even "no, but there should have been, why didn't I think of that?" then say yes. If you feel the answer is "no, but while that's not very likely, it's not unreasonable" then the answer to give is "I don't know, is there?" while looking meaningfully at the player's Fate points. It is only if you feel that the request is entirely out of line that your answer should be "No ." Try not to block reasonable requests as the player is likely to be imagining an interesting course of action based on a 'yes'.

People

As with scenes, don't try to provide too much detail. Players usually pick one or two things to remember a character by, so try to pick perhaps three elements and describe those. If there's some other element you need to reveal, work it into the scene, describing it as part of an action the character takes.

A Trick

Find an author whose work you enjoy, and take a moment to look at how they describe things and people. When a new character shows up, how much time does the author spend on the description? How many elements does the author reveal? Every author has a slightly different cadence, but if you can isolate one that you enjoy, you may find that using it to provide your own colour makes your life much easier.

Drama

Drama is that information which leads directly to action. The clearest form of drama is the immediate threat – "there's an energy sword swinging towards your head, what do you do?" – but there are also discoveries like "This clearly proves the Captain is the killer. What do you do?" Implicit in any dramatic information is that question: What do you do?

The hardest part about providing such information is remembering that the more immediate the requirement for action is, the better. Consider the second example above – you have proof that the Captain is the killer. If all the suspects are just milling about waiting for the Star Patrol to come along, then there is no immediacy. The players could sit on the information as long as they like, pursue secondary goals and otherwise generally twiddle their thumbs until they feel like it.

If, on the other hand, the Captain is already across the Starport, and he's about to meet his likely next victim, then the characters must act! Naturally, the Captain has jammed the communicator of his victim, so the players are going to have to race across the Starport to try to catch him at the last moment!

Assuming that the second description is closer to the kind of game you want to run, there are three necessary elements to any dramatic reveal: tension, consequence and clarity.

Tension is required to make sure that a choice must be made now. This usually means that the matter is time sensitive in some way. Tension is also the implicit difficulty of the task at hand. If it can be done casually, there's no tension to speak of because no choice needs to be made. Tension is what forces the player's hand, and makes them make a choice.

The most important consequence of any piece of dramatic information is what will happen if the players do nothing. Whatever those consequences are, they should be bad – inaction should always be one of the worst choices that the players can make.

Even if you get the other two elements, they'll be nothing but frustrating unless you also provide clarity – players must have at least one clear course of action available to them. Without that, the players are reduced to being spectators, which is not where

they want to be. Don't be afraid to be obvious. The clearest course of action may be a simple as "Get over there and take him down!" Even if there are multiple potential courses of action, go out of your way to make sure that the players are aware of at least one with a better outcome than the consequence of doing nothing.

Consequence, Consequence, Consequence

Tension and clarity are usually the easy part of the equation. Tension is usually just an extension of the consequence, and clarity depends mostly on the Story Teller's ability to communicate. Consequence is really the heart and soul of drama, and as a Story Teller, you are going to need to get a firm grasp on what that means.

The simple yardstick for consequence is how much the players are invested in it. Sounds easy, sure, but what are your players going to invest in? For some players, it's going to be the same things that their characters are invested in. For others it's going to be whatever makes for the most interesting story. For others, it will need to be a threat directly to themselves or their stuff.

No one knows your group better than you do, so there's a limit to how far our advice can take you. Make the decisions that work best for you. Still, in case it's useful, here are a few tips.

- Consequences that are absolute (death and destruction) are usually less potent than more transitory ones (injury and damage). While this may seem counterintuitive, it makes sense if you remember that if an Extra dies, it's very sad, but it is only if they're badly injured that they can blame the character for what happened to them.
- Especially avoid any consequence that will end the game. When you plan a consequence, you must be sure you have a plan for how things will move forward if it comes to pass.
- A consequence that makes characters look foolish is surprisingly motivational, especially if you make sure Extra's have long memories.
- Remember, consequences don't always need to be bad. The only thing that needs to be bad is that inaction is the worst option, but that can be highly relative. If a player discovers that he has a winning galactic lottery ticket, but has only 10 minutes to get to the office to turn it in, then you have all the elements you need: tension (only 10 minutes to get across town), consequence (if no action is taken, the player won't win, but if he succeeds, he'll get a prize) and clarity (get to the ticket office, and fast!).

Clarity & Choice

Sometimes (almost always, even) a piece of dramatic information will have more than one potential course of action available as a reasonable response. Sometimes the difference is merely one of tactics or appearance, but sometimes the choice needs to be made between multiple options which each have consequences (albeit consequences which are not as bad as doing nothing).

Now, these choices are good opportunities for play all by themselves, but as a Story Teller, these are the moments you want to look for. These are the times when a character's Aspects are at their most meaningful – if they have two choices, and their Aspects would lean them towards one over the other, that's exactly when you roll out a Fate point and brandish it casually. If the choice their Aspect leans towards is a little tougher, that's even better.

Getting Blindsided

Players will sometimes outsmart you, or just get crazy lucky. Sometimes you will provide a piece of dramatic information and have all the pieces in place and they will respond in a way that comes completely out of left field, and which undercuts your entire expectation for the scene, perhaps even leapfrogging past any amount of preparation you've done. This is insanely frustrating, and the instinct is to immediately invent a reason why they can't do that so as to force them back on track.

DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!

If you do this, your players will know. They will. Honest. And they'll think it sucks because it will feel like you're punishing them for getting into the game. And they'll be right.

If this happens, roll with it. You should have a strong enough sense of the motives of the various Extra's in play, their plans and consequences that you should be able to adapt to it. And if you can't? Don't sweat it. Take a second, look sheepish, then praise your players. Let them know they did something

pretty clever, and have them take a few minutes to grab a drink or whatever while you rough up some notes to deal with this. It'll work out, and by the time they get back, you'll probably find you've been inspired by this turn of events. So there's your pressure valve: confess to getting caught off guard, step back, look at what's happened, and you'll find yourself fueled by this turn of events rather than burned. Your players will get a chance to grin and feel clever out while you prepare their next challenge.

Building a Mystery

Now that you have a clear idea of the difference between colour and drama, you need to keep it in mind as you play. One of the most frustrating things that can happen in play is that the Story Teller muddles the two, and includes some dramatic information in the midst of a barrage of color and expects his players to "catch on". This is dirty pool, and it leads to nothing but frustration. Don't mix these things up. There are always cases which seem like they're a little bit of both, and handling them can be tricky. The cases you most want to look for are clues and tells.

Tells

Tells are pieces of colour information that may seem like dramatic information, but aren't. They are pieces of information which wave a flag and say "there's something to investigate here!" without revealing what that *something* is. Think of them as a bit like a poker "tell" – something's showing on that guy's face, *but what does it mean?* Tells draw in player curiosity without innately satisfying it – until that player then takes action to dig deeper. Therefore, in practice a tell is usually a piece of information about a person or thing which is not immediately apparent to all observers, but which one character discovers. While this information may provide perspective, or be useful in any number of ways, it *suggests no course of action* (other than saying "there's a rock to turn over here!"), which is why it stays firmly in the colour camp.

For example Brandon notices that the Admiral seems to develop a nervuos twitch of his left eye when he talks of the Nasua Expedition. What really happened on Nasua? Brandon's investigating the death of his friend who served with the Admiral on that mission.

The line between a tell (colour), and drama that the player doesn't care about, is almost indistinguishable.

If Brandon noticed the Admiral's eye twitching when he spoke of his time on Earth it might not be so relevant.

Tells should be interesting. As colour, interest is their only currency, and they may eventually turn some *other* piece of information into drama rather than colour, or it may influence a choice later on. Tells are also a great way for you, as a Story Teller, to test the waters of player interest. In a given situation, if a player picks up four tells, but only pursues two, the ones he pursues are where you want to situate your plot.

Clues

Clues are pieces of information that are dramatic, but which handle tension and clarity differently than usual. Usually, tension exists for the larger situation, rather than for an individual clue. When a character is faced with a complex piece of drama, it is often broken into smaller sections, represented as clues.

What's the next (immediate) action of the characters? The answer to that question is usually "look for clues", but that's a fairly meaningless piece of advice. Clues, as discrete pieces of information, must also suggest action, but that action may simply lead to the next clue. This is a very tricky balancing act, but done right, it means that each clue is its own piece of dramatic information. But to look at these clues another way, they all have the same tension and consequence, and they only vary in terms of clarity. Thus, for a mystery, the mystery itself provides the tension and consequence, but not the clarity, while each clue may provide no new consequences or tension, but does provide clarity. This sequence of clues is the *chain of evidence*.

Tells and Clues

Tells should not be clues in their own right, but they can affect the clarity of a clue, by making it clear that there are more options than the obvious. To the player, this distinction may seem almost unnoticeable, but it's useful for the Story Teller to keep in mind because it's critical for keeping mysteries framed in such a way that they are neither too easy nor too hard to solve.

Secrets Kill!

Now, bearing in mind that we've been talking about mysteries here, at no point have we talked about how to *keep* information from players. There's a simple reason for that – *it's a bad idea*.

This returns to that core responsibility of the Story Teller as the provider of information, but here is a basic rule of thumb: *if there is a piece of information to be found, a player should find it, the only question is when and how*. A piece of information in your notes should be treated like a gun introduced in the first act of a play – it's going to go off sometime before the end. By the same token, if there's a secret door in the complex, then it is not the player's responsibility to find it, it is *your* responsibility to show it to them.

This may seem overly generous, like you're giving everything to players on a silver platter, but remember that it is the *player's* responsibility to act, and to face the consequences of his actions. Rather than hand the results to the players outright, you are giving the players *opportunities* to act.

How do you make that happen? *Stick to the rules of providing drama*. As long as there is tension and consequence to make players act, and clarity to provide them a means to act, then you're good to go.

Gathering Information

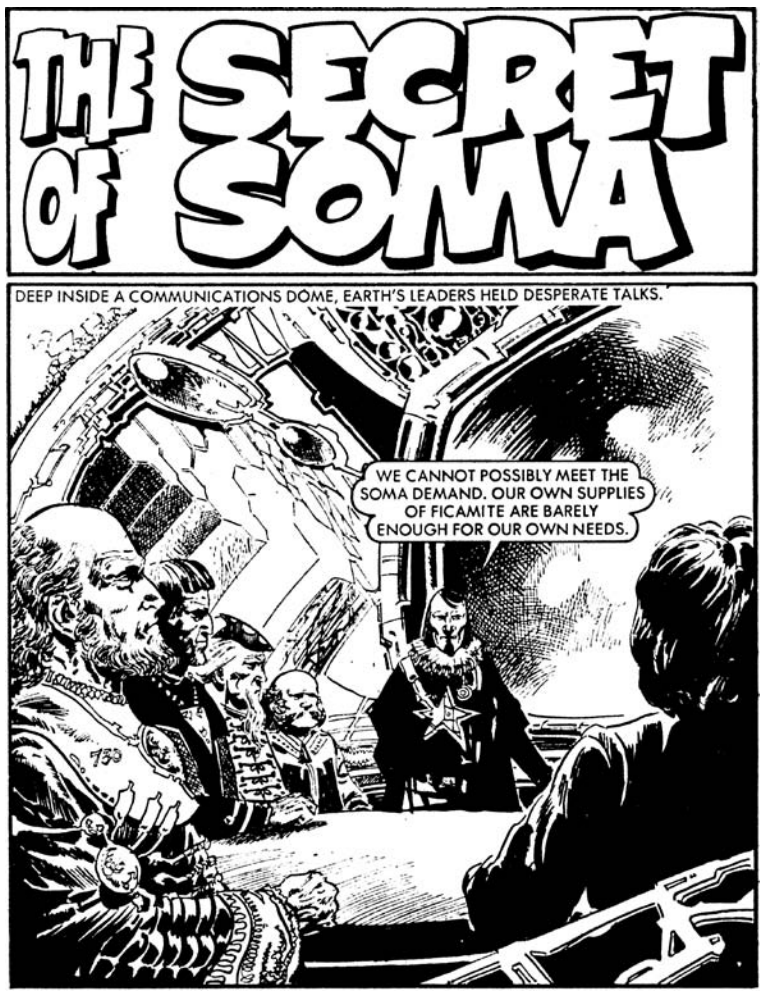
When players set out to gather information, be it research, contact or any other means, you need to decide if they're going to get drama, a clue, or a tell. This is partly influenced by the situation, and partly influenced by your read of player intent.

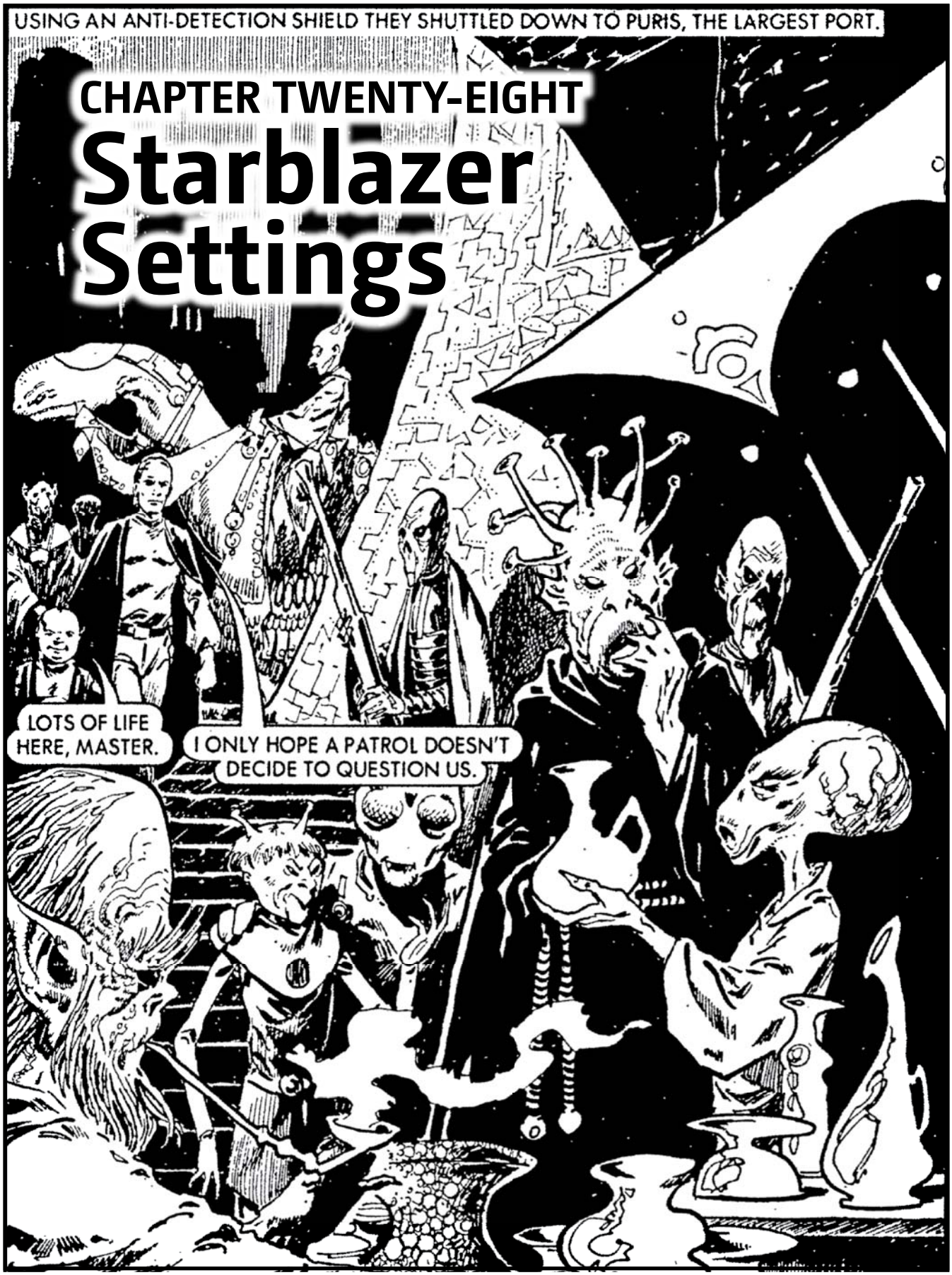
If the characters already have a dramatic situation, but they're gathering information because they don't see the clear path of action, then they should find a tell which helps provide the clarity.

If the characters already have a dramatic situation and they see at least one clear path, but they're researching to try to find another (or to find another solution entirely) then you make a judgment call. If there is another potential path that you think would be useful for them to see, give them a tell that points to that. If you think the players are grasping at straws, take a moment to assess the situation. It's possible you've been too harsh, and your players are flailing around, looking for an alternative. If you agree, this might be your cue to throw them a rope, and introduce a new option with a tell. Of course, if you think they're just trying to weasel out of a tough choice, then give them a tell that underlines the forthcoming consequence (your most basic form of clarity is a simple reminder).

The best way to tell which one players are doing is this simple test: Are they trying to simplify a complex situation so that no one has to suffer any consequences ? If so, they're acting like bureaucrats, not heroes, and you need to emphasize to them that their job is to do the best they can with what they have – not to spin their wheels endlessly worrying about what-ifs.

If the characters are already in a mystery, then they're probably researching to get more clarity on their clue, so feel free to provide a tell to that end. If, however, characters are gathering information because the players can't think of anything else to do, then it's time to throw some *drama* at them. That's what they're here for.


THE SECRET OF SOMA
DEEP INSIDE A COMMUNICATIONS DOME, EARTH'S LEADERS HELD DESPERATE TALKS.
WE CANNOT POSSIBLY MEET THE SOMA DEMAND. OUR OWN SUPPLIES OF FICAMITE ARE BARELY ENOUGH FOR OUR OWN NEEDS.


USING AN ANTI-DETECTION SHIELD THEY SHUTTLED DOWN TO PURIS, THE LARGEST PORT.
CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT
Starblazer Settings
LOTS OF LIFE HERE, MASTER.
I ONLY HOPE A PATROL DOESN'T DECIDE TO QUESTION US.

Starblazer Settings

The Starblazer comics are set across a backdrop of literally thousands of years of history from the early space cowboy days as humans meet their first alien foes through the mighty adventures of the many human empires and finally to the sea of life that is galactic civilisation.

We've broken these many Starblazer Legends in to three categories;

The Trailblazer Era or 'Space Cowboys & Smoking Lasers'. Earth's first steps in to the Galaxy whether it's rocking around the Solar System, fighting off the first alien invaders or the first journey's to mysterious nearby worlds this era is definitely trigger happy!

The Empire Era or 'Fortress Earth & The Thermal Wars' sees an assortment of human empires and terran federations trying to impose themselves on the galaxy. Titanic fleet battles, galactic diplomacy, exploring strange parts of the galaxy and discovering the, usually, hostile artefacts of ancient races are the norm.

The Cosmopolitan Era or 'Who Elected the Guy with Two Heads' is set around the rise and fall of galactic civilisation – thousands of strange alien races share every corner of the galaxy with mankind who is now just part of the huge melting pot.

Not all Starblazer issues will fall in to these categories, some deal with versions of a post apocalyptic Earth whilst others fall firmly in the realms of fantasy and they'll be covered in one of the forthcoming supplements. For the Starblazer core book we're concentrating on the issues (and there's plenty of them) that fit in one of these three eras.

In a later chapter you'll find some sample Starblazer Legends expanded on as adventure seed ideas.

The Trailblazing Era or 'Space Cowboys & Smoking Lasers!'

Sometime early in the third millennium of it's history the human race took its first faltering steps into deep space and became, for the first time, a civilisation that had grown beyond it's home planet. In this early period, danger came often to Earth from beyond the boundaries of human space and it was only by dogged determination and heroic feats that the race could survive the strange and superior threats that it faced.

Adventures in the Trailblazing Era are focussed on the early years of man's journey into space (although they are based more on the middle years of the Starblazer comic). It is an era of tentative interstellar exploration, of the everyday dangers of an overcrowded Earth and hostile space, and on the potentially deadly alien threats that are growing ever closer to the cradle of the human race.

The Leap Into Space

The first steps into space were taken using primitive chemical rockets and limited orbital vehicles some time in the 20th and 21st centuries according to the Terran calendar, but space travel was not actively pursued for much more than placing satellites in orbit.

All that changed as Earth grew ever more populated and the environment grew closer and closer to collapse. Global warming (see 277 *Alpha*), and global wars (see 263 *The Killing Trade*) forced mankind to seek new homes in space. From these desperate times, often known as the first Thermal War, colonies sprang up in orbit, on the moon, and on the other inner planets. Only once humanity had truly found a way to live off the surface of the Earth was the collapse of their home planet averted. With new technologies, resources, and forms of power, Earth began to move towards a more peaceful era of world government and world peace.

Over time larger and more sophisticated space ships were built that enabled interplanetary, and even intersolar travel to be possible, but easy interstellar, or faster than light, travel, remained a fantasy far beyond human science. What was within reach, however, were orbital space stations, asteroid mines, and even journeys to the cometary halo or a few nearby star systems. Despite these technological achievements, however, space travel was still far from ordinary, and space ship ownership was the province of governments, the military, and a few powerful companies rather than individuals.

The Solar System

The Solar System of the Trailblazing Era is full of human activity, but the mass of the human race still lives where it always did, on Earth, or at least in near orbit floating cities and stardomes close by it (see 129 Chariots of Fear, and 214 Blind Rage). Smaller colonies have been set up on the other habitable inner planets, such as the Moon and Mars, and work is underway

on the terraforming of Venus. Further out one of the main zones of human activity in space is the asteroid belts, and the resource and mineral rich rings of Jupiter and Saturn. Even the far off cometary halo has been tapped for usable resources, although the journey to the outer planets is a long and lonely tour of duty usually undertaken by lone pilots in command of predominantly robotic vessels.

The Moon and Earth Orbit : Despite it's lack of air the Moon is the most populated body in the Sol system outside of the Earth itself. The main military space bases are on the dark side, able to launch quickly in response to any threat, while the near side is dotted with weather control and communication bases, as well as larger domed cities supplied from Earth, or from the many habitats in close Earth orbit. These orbital habitats house more people than the Moon, though that balance is slowly shifting, and were the first permanent habitations in space. Although there are many small orbitals the most significant starbases are domed cities built on asteroids towed into orbit.

Mars : After the Moon the next largest inhabited body is Mars, which is marginally habitable and growing ever more so as the climate is changed. From landing fields around Olympus Mons supplies are constantly brought to the city at Mars Base One.

Venus : It is mankind's hope that Venus may one day be as habitable as Mars, but to date the terraforming process has been slow and unproductive. Financed by the world Government before the first deep space colony ships were launched (see below) the project now languishes in the charge of a handful of scientists with little funding or support.

The Asteroids : The Asteroid belt beyond Mars is the heart of the mining industry in space. Sigram Industries controls the Mining Station on the asteroid Ceres, where prospecting ships are repaired and space miners can find entertainment on which to waste their earnings. There are many other mining concerns operating from makeshift bases on whichever other large asteroid they are currently mining. The space lanes through the belt are manned by traffic control stations and patrolled by the military.

Jupiter's Moons : Jupiter is the most remote area to be significantly inhabited in the Solar System, though there are small outposts all the way to Pluto. The largest moons of Jupiter, Ganymede and Callisto, both have significant domed space cities on them, and the military's deep space warning systems are based in Jovian orbit. The majesty of Jupiter, and its associations with ancient Earth Gods, has made 'Jupe!' a popular exclamation.

Despite the variety of commercial and military bases, and the ships that ply the space lanes between them, the Sol system is still a very empty place with humans few and far between outside Earth orbit.

Jobs in space are easy to find for those that wish to have them, if they are willing to sign on with one of the multi-planetary mining companies, or the slightly smaller corporations that fly the ponderous cargo vessels to the struggling colony worlds and deep space stations. Other careers are available in the Earth Government military, aboard the new class of space battleships, or on the smaller patrol ships dedicated to fighting the new menace of space pirates. Even more lonely careers are available manning the deep space traffic control towers (the Trailblazing Era's equivalent of lonely lighthouses), or as the space jockey in charge of a solo exploration vehicle.

Space may seem a lonely and enormous place, but Mankind is far from alone in the heavens. Bitter events of human history have taught this lesson well. Although no alien race has yet set their sights on the human race with the intent to conquer it (although see the Epic plots section for some alternatives to this) more than one alien artefact has already found its way to the Solar System by simple chance. Some of these are no more than remains of derelict vessels or long defunct probe craft found on the frozen surface of Pluto, or drifting in the empty reaches of space. Others, however, have been far more deadly threats to Earth itself!

Threats to Earth

As Mankind has begun to delve deeper into space, so the threats of space have come to Earth. Vast alien vessels, many launched eons ago by dying races, ply the dark reaches of open space, and to them the quick bright lights of the new Solar civilisation are like candle flames to dark predatory moths; irresistible.

The human race has already had more than one encounter with such threats. It was only the heroics of a single man, Captain Trent of the Deep Space Exploration Squad, that prevented the man Zul, last survivor of a dying world, from destroying the Sun in the hope that it's energy could be used to relight the stars of his own system (see 112 *Sunstealers*), and the new age of

peace came close to total destruction when the killer comet passed through the Solar System and infected half the world with madness (see 120 *Killer Comet*).

If these threats were not enough to convince mankind that they must look constantly to the stars, then the invasion of the Hebus taught them differently. Fleeing the death of their own sun the last sons of Hebus set sail in a mighty Starship, in the hope that they might one day find a new world on which to live. Frozen in cryogenic sleep, and tended by robots, their vessel travelled for unknown years before it drifted into the Solar system. Soon the vast ship came to Earth, and the Hebans awoke.

The arrival of the Hebus could have been the start of a new golden age for earth, propelled into a new era by Heban technology, if only the Hebans had been friendly. Sadly the Hebans were a cruel and warlike race, riven by factions and convinced that it was their destiny to enslave any other race that they should encounter. With their greater technology the Hebans easily overcame Earth's defences, bombarding the planet with radiation that sapped people of the will to resist. They then declared themselves the rulers of the planet and set humanity to work as their slaves.

Luckily, for all their power, the Hebans were few in number, and arrogant to the point of carelessness. When the Hebans turned on each other in a battle for control a few humans were able to sneak aboard their craft and do enough damage to destroy it. Without their battleship the remaining Hebans lost control of Earth, and though they fought fiercely and to the death they were eventually overcome. (See 133 *Death Came Silently!*)

WE GO BACK TO EARTH TO WORK ON A VACCINE TO COMBAT THE VIRUS . . . JUST IN CASE THERE ARE MORE COMETS DUE.
MOON BASE 4
SO ENDED AN ALIEN ATTACK. BUT WHO KNOWS HOW MANY COMETS ARE STILL INFECTED BY THE DEADLY RELS.

Colony Ships and Deep Space Explorers

Although the Hebans were defeated their attack left a clear message in human minds, the Galaxy was full of danger and humanity could not avoid it by sitting still in their own Solar system and hoping that it would pass them by. The encounters with Zul, and the discovery of alien artefacts as they explored the deeps of the Solar system, only underlined the point. (For other takes on the sort of threats that could have spurred mankind to set off into deep space see 'The Moonstealers', and 'The Seas of Samor' in the Epic plots section, and issue 116, *The Starstone*, amongst other Starblazers).

It is this realisation that has spurred the development of deep space vessels designed to carry humanity beyond the Solar System. Only once humanity is spread over many worlds can it truly be safe from alien threat, so it is reasoned.

Lacking any means of faster than light travel, humanity has instead turned to cryo-stasis as the basis for it's long range vessels. Frozen like the Hebans, and protected in life support vessels from acceleration, it is possible for human crew to cross the vast distances to other worlds.

Many early attempts at interstellar travel met with sad failure, the most notable being the first and last journey of the Osma, the first real interstellar vessel, which returned from ten years in space with all it's crew dead, but mankind has pushed on regardless.

Realising that there is no way that even the fastest probe ships stand a chance of finding a habitable world and returning again before the next threat comes to Earth the world government has taken the high risk step of constructing huge slower than light colony ships and launching them into the night, in the hope that one day they may find worlds of their own and set up new human life far from Earth.

It is all but certain that no one who sets out on these journeys will ever see Earth again, and highly likely that their scattered descendants will never meet others of their kind, but still the colonists come, willing to take the risk to escape the crowded cities, acid rain, sweltering heat, and other hardships of Earth. Surely some of these ships will come to ruin, but perhaps, just perhaps, some of them will do as the Hebans did, and find a new world to call home. (For examples of such ships see the introduction to 116 *The Starstone*, 188 *The Infernal Triangle*, 55 *Target Earth*).

Technology & Culture

The Technology of the Trailblazing Era is both wonderfully strange, and somewhat familiar, to our eyes. Humanity itself is pretty much the same as today, although perhaps a little more altruistic than we might recognise from the 21st century. Most technology is far more advanced than today, but the truly miraculous inventions, such as limitless clean power, faster than light travel, nanotechnology, teleportation, anti-gravity, force fields and the like, remain as out of reach then as now.

Space Travel : Perhaps the biggest advances have been made in the field of space travel. Space ships, while common, are far from everywhere, but few people would be terribly alarmed at the thought of a space journey, especially to the orbital domes and habitats. Small vessels are capable of moving easily around the inner solar system, with journeys to the asteroid belt measured in days rather than weeks. While smaller scout and patrol vessels are capable of landing on planetary surfaces, larger ships are built in orbit and dock with space stations rather than landing on worlds. Artificial gravity is still no more than fiction, but larger vessels use various devices to simulate it.

Military technology : Of equal interest to the average adventurer is the technology of weapons and guns. Although gunpowder powered projectile weapons are still in use by civilians during the First Thermal War and the Heban invasion spurred the invention of the blaster gun, and energy weapons are now the norm amongst armed forces. Starships are normally armed with larger versions of the same weapons, or missiles with low yield neutron and

proton warheads. Space suits are usually hardened against blaster fire, lighter weight versions of military armour, and weapons are ubiquitous enough for there to be a black market that supplies the new breed of space pirate.

Medical technology : Apart from the perfection of reversible cryo-stasis (based on Heban technology) Trailblazer medical technology is not significantly advanced over that of previous centuries. Although cybernetics have advanced to the point where full limb replacement is a practical option for the injured, donor organs for transplant are still required, infectious diseases remain a threat, and nanotechnology is not a practical form of treatment. On the other hand many previously un-survivable injuries can now be healed, medical scanners are now portable, and donor organs can be frozen for years until they are needed.

One tricky area is genetic engineering. During the First Thermal War the bodies and minds of soldiers were radically altered to make them into virtual fighting machines. After the war there was an equally intense revulsion at what had been done, to the point that such modification, although possible, is virtually taboo.

Computers and Robots : Practical artificial intelligence became a possibility early on in the Trailblazing Era, and was just as quickly abandoned after the first true artificial intelligence attempted to take over the world and eradicate humanity. Since that time limited AI has been common in most computer systems, and voice activation is commonplace. However robots remain rare curiosities and neither virtual reality systems nor holograms are in use. Greater computer technology was in use before the First Thermal War, with some armies deploying armed killer droids, but such technology died with the men who had used it.

Transport and Construction : Outside space most travel is by mass transport systems within the crowded cities of Earth. Individual motor vehicles are uncommon, and fossil fuels are long ago exhausted. Nevertheless most cities still bear traces of their 20th century past, with stone buildings amongst the skyscrapers and roads separating the buildings. With limited resources and space most new construction is built on the bones of the old, with the newest buildings being the utilitarian constructions of the off-world colonies.

Economy and Government : Although Earth now has a unified world government traces of the nations that once made it up still remain, and familiar cities still exist. Earth also still has all the familiar occupations, service industries, and the like with a few notable exceptions. Many jobs once the preserve of humans, such as manufacturing and financial work have been handed over to computers and automated systems. At the same time the extraction of raw materials has moved to space, where a hardy breed of space miners and prospectors live and work in the lawless fringe of the asteroid belts. Again although it is now an era of peace the sheer mass of people on earth makes law enforcement almost impossible, so the private investigator is a far more common occupation than it once was.

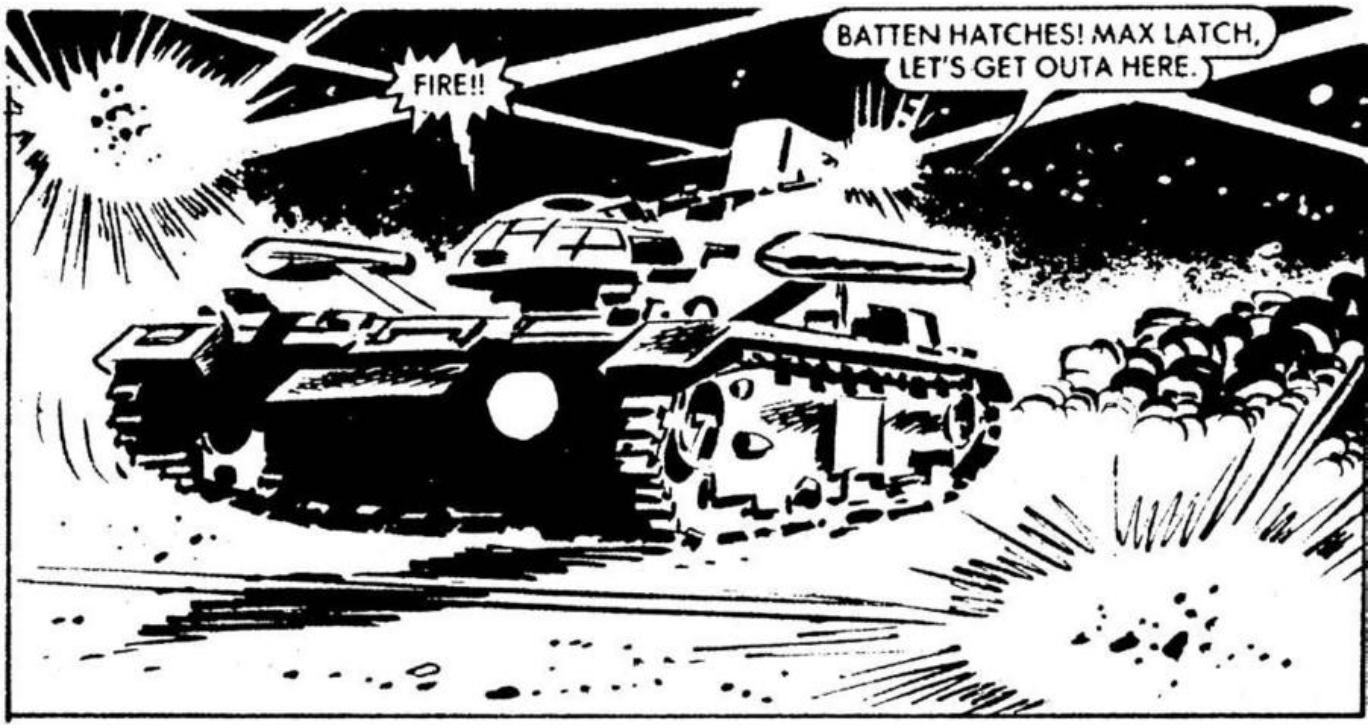
Adventures in the Trailblazing Era

Adventures in this Era fall into three broad types.

The first, (typified by 277 *Alpha*) are adventures set in the crowded cities of Earth, or on its orbital habitats and stardomes. Such adventures are primarily human in focus, dealing with crime and investigation. The perfect character for such stories is the Private Investigator, and with smugglers, rogue AIs, killer War-surplus robots, missing persons and hate-crimes to deal with there is plenty of work on offer.

The second type focuses on the day to day hardships of life in space, or its wonders. There are asteroids to be mined, cargos to be hauled between the inner planets, new ground to be broken on Mars and the habitable moons, Space Pirates to be combated (or joined, depending on your inclinations) and alien relics to find in open space. Small groups of characters might have their own rust bucket spaceship, or they might work for the World Government. Alternatively it is the perfect time to volunteer as the crew of a deep space exploration vessel … just don't expect to come home soon.

Finally there are the heroic adventures to defend Earth from the alien threats. At any time a huge alien vessel may be slipping into the Solar system, intent on stealing Earth's Sun, exploding the Moon, enslaving it's people, or some other terrifying goal. Armed with superior weapons, killer robots, and evil intent, only the bravest human heroes have a chance to stop them. If you can sling a blaster, know your science, and your scout vessel just happened to have been in the right place at the right time, then you might have a chance.



The Era of Expansion; or, 'Fortress Earth & The Thermal Wars'

Humanity was already a mature space-faring culture, albeit one restricted largely to its own Solar System, when they first discovered the secret of faster than light travel. Almost overnight everything changed. The discovery of the warp engine brought both rapid travel and cheap power, and sent the human race out into space like never before. When they got there they found, as they had always suspected, that the Galaxy was far from empty. Alien Empires surrounded them on every side, and new worlds, and new enemies, were everywhere to be found.

The Era of expansion is a setting full of space opera and military adventure. Aliens of all sorts are bent on war and conquest, and humanity has the weapons to fight their corner and carve out their own empire. This is the era of the Galac-Squad and the Fighting Scientists, an age of headlong expansion, heady discoveries, and desperate battles on the high seas of space.

Faster than light travel

They key to the Era of Expansion is the discovery of faster than light travel, also known as warp, or hyper-space travel. Although humanity had known for many decades that faster than light travel was possible, from their early encounters with hostile aliens, the secret of their manufacture had always escaped them. The key discovery was that every hyper space drive requires one of a number of unique mineral compounds that form the basis both of clean reactors and faster than light drives.

On Earth the key mineral was Xenobium (other races have used Strontilcite, Plasteen and more). Once Xenobium was discovered and put to use humanity quickly shifted from slower than light colony vessels and short range interplanetary vessels and began to spread out into the Galaxy in their Starships, seeking new worlds to colonize. Larger vessels carried their own warp drives, while smaller ships were still able to make interstellar journeys using warp gates at major start systems.

When they reached beyond the nearest star systems they quickly began to encounter other alien Empires, such as the humanoid Magnons (see 107 *The Magnon Menace*), feline Odelotians (see 139 *Astral Armada*, and the Epic plots section), Bargez, Asur, Shabot and many eyed Choth (see 162 *The D-Team*), reptilian Dazelians (see 139 *The Raid on Rourke's Star*) and more.

The Thermal Wars

Though humanity was finally at peace with itself it soon found itself locked in deadly war with the races that surrounded it. This was an time of huge confidence amongst humanity, a gung-ho spirit that made them refuse to become a minor race in any alien empire or dictatorship.

Instead the human race went to war, expanding its borders with each new colony, placing starbases and patrol vessels along the space lanes and at strategic warp gates. In some cases they were able to make treaties with the alien races they met, setting up such things as the Magnon neutral zone, but in many other cases the xenophobic humans went straight to war. With an ever increasing population, and the resources of many worlds to draw on, mankind became a warlike people, with fleets of battleships and the military as the highest authority.

Amongst the many battles of this era three conflicts stand out amongst all the others, those that gained the name the Thermal Wars, in memory of the great conflict that nearly destroyed human civilisation before they took to the stars.

The first of these wars was with the Shabot. The second involved the three-eyed (and three-fingered) Choth, who thought to take advantage of Earth when it was weak. The third was against the Imperial Magnons, who had alternated between war and tenuous peace with humanity for the previous century before the final war. The last, and most significant, was waged with the Odelotians, a feline-humanoid race with resources to equal humanities own (for another take on the Odelotian war see the Epic plots section below). This final war, most of all, came close to bankrupting human civilisation, and in its aftermath mankind began to seek a new way.

The Terran Federation

By the end of the Fourth Thermal war the frontiers of the human federation were finally secure, and it's taste for war was very much gone. Although it had made many advances, and won many wars, it had also suffered tragedies and lost countless battles. The wastes of space were filled with the drifting wrecks of conflict, and the human race decided that it had been under the rule of the Military for too long. From this the Terran Federation was born as a new and democratic alliance of human worlds. To quote issue 121

> *"The planet Earth had been the inspiration for the Terran Federation; men of vision and courage had warped out from the sol star-system to explore the galaxy and ultimately control it"*

The Terran Federation now is a society living with the legacy of these wars. Old soldiers are easy to find, and many have a hard time adjusting to peace (see 242 *The Psycho Squad*, 40 *Planet Tamer*, 138 *Raid on Rourke's Star*, and 162 *The D Team*). Some are shunned by the worlds that trained them, some have signed on with the new security forces of the Federation, some have turned bounty hunter or mercenary, and some have set out into the unknown in search of adventure.

The Terran Federation is an organisation of many planets, some newly colonized, some settled by the colony ships of previous eras, each with their own governments. Some colonies are little more than a handful of buildings or former military starbases, others are thriving planets in their own right which are slowly absorbing the excess population and key industries of Earth. Despite being surrounded by alien cultures, with which they are now at peace, human worlds are still largely human populated, and aliens are an unusual sight on the streets of human cities. Resources are easily available, and new technology is constantly developed, but the ravages of war have left some worlds badly in need of rebuilding. A selection of significant planets and space hazards include :

Earth : Despite the many worlds now occupied by man Earth still holds a precious place for the human race, and is still the most populated Terran world. However the Earth of the Expansion era is a very different place to the one that existed before the invention of the warp drive. It is no longer dominated by crowding, pollution, and crime, but instead is filled with parks, squares, elegant planned cities, and the administration of the Federation.

Soleous Prime : This spaceport planet sits at the nexus of trading routes between Earth space, the Choth Empire, and the Magnon neutral zone. Ships are constantly coming and going from Shadsar, the continent spanning capital city. Home to millions of people Soleous Prime is a restrictive and oppressive world, where highly armed Cobra agents execute dissidents on the word of the government. (see 262 *Cobra*)

Multiways : A galactic hub located outside of human space, Multiways is an artificial world run

by alien robots and powered by steam. The master controller of Multiways allows humans on its world under sufferance, as well as many of their enemies.

Capal II : Situated in the Arcturic system Capal II is the source of Plasteen, one of the wonder minerals that power interstellar warp drives. Capall II is orbited by a Galac Squad patrol base, ready to protect it from alien menace. (adapted from 161 *Seeds of Madness*)

Kilindini and Sansibarr : Typical of backwards worlds throughout the Federation, where the Terran government has little influence, these twin planets are ruled by an arrogant despot who imports slaves from all over the Galaxy. The planet is heavily defended with war-era weaponry bought with the profits of slavery. (see 129 *The Grave of Mankind*)

Caudus : This world occupies a key location between Earth and Aquilla, a hostile alien Empire. It is the vital location of a warp gate that allows the Federation to defend itself from Aquilla, but the planet itself is all but unoccupied due to the deadly giant serpents that infest its surface. (see 81 *The Serpents of Sirius*)

Space Ice : Fields of space ice are one of the hazards of the Galactic space lanes, capable of crushing any ship not armed with Cyclone fortifiers. Normal force shields are of no use. One of the greatest fields of space ice is located in the rings of the planet Tigo, a resource frequently mined to supply drinking water for more parched worlds.

Although each world has its own government and local law enforcement most matters are delegated to Federal authorities, especially in matters of defence, trade, maintenance of warp gates and foreign policy. At the core of these Federal organisations are the Galac Squad and the Fighting Scientists.

The Galac Squad and Fighting Scientists

In the aftermath of the last Thermal War the Terran Federation did away with it's standing army, and replaced it with the Galac Squad, a smaller force which is a cross between an armed force and a specialist law enforcement unit. The Galac Squad maintain armed vessels that patrol the borders of human space (see 135 *The Lost Patrol*), as well as numerous starbases, or which starbase one on earth is the central hub (see 121 *Nightmare Ship*). When trouble threatens the Terran Federation it is the ships of the Galac Squad that respond, armed with the best weapons and technology that human science has to offer.

Amongst these specialists are some more specialist still, the Fighting Scientists, or Fi-Sci, typified by the famous Hadron Halley (who appears in numerous issues). The Fi-Sci combine fighting strength with scientific expertise. When danger beyond the understanding of normal science threatens, when worlds are engulfed by living foam, or once defeated enemies return from the dead, or indestructible alien beasts attack colonists, it is the Fi-Sci that are called to deal with the problem. (see *121 Nightmare Ship*, 81 *The Serpents of Sirius*, 130 *Vassal's Revenge*, 185 *The Warlord of Laama* and more).

It's a great big Galaxy, with old enemies and new dangers all around, but humanity has proven itself equal to the task and surely always will.

Technology & Culture

The Technology of the Era of Expansion is far removed from that of our Earth, with many marvellous things now possible and new inventions, human and alien alike, always being discovered. Things that would have been nothing more than science fiction in previous eras, faster than light travel, clean power, force fields, teleportation, artificial gravity, androids and more. There are terrible weapons too, but it's a new era of hope and optimism.

Space Travel : Space travel is now an easy enough matter to be almost commonplace, with Interstellar travel, even to the furthest reaches of space, as easy as interplanetary travel was in earlier ages. Although the average individual isn't likely to own a spaceship of their own, small firms usually do, and commercial Interstellar travel is as cheap as a transatlantic flight once was. Nowhere in the galaxy is more than a couple of weeks of travel away at high warp, and even smaller ships can reach the main settled worlds through the warp gate network. So long as the crucial minerals (Xenobium, Plasteen, Strontilcite and the rest) keep flowing then power is cheap and travel is simple.

Military technology : Three Thermal Wars and many minor conflicts have left behind a legacy of military technology, both bad and good. Blaster weapons are now standard, and force shields protect major installations, a fact that led to space fleets and infiltration units dominating fighting rather than strategic deterrents. Some soldiers are even equipped with personal forcefields, although these are more

likely to be the equipment of an alien warlord than his troops.

During the wars many soldiers were heavily modified, given computer implants, bionic limbs, genetic alterations, and even psychic powers. Various powers experimented with such abominations as clone troopers, robot armies, and penal legions. Although such things are no longer a part of the heroic world of the Galac Squad the legacy still remains, and humanity now avoids such things, and the soldiers left behind.

Medical technology : To a large extent infectious illnesses and diseases such as cancer are no longer a threat to humanity, although the occasional alien infection sometimes requires the Fi-Sci to intervene. All sorts of serious injuries can be treated with replacement organs and artificial skin, and in those cases that can't cybernetic limbs are almost as good as the originals (or in some cases better). Despite these advances the human lifespan is still much the same as it always was. People still age, and die, and death can be all too easy out in the wide Galaxy.

Computers and Robots : Although voice control for shipboard computers is standard, and both artificial intelligences and androids were used during the war, robots are not a major part of human society outside of specialist fields such as construction. Nevertheless a cyborg is still a more common site on a human world than an alien.

Transport and more : On human worlds the buildings and structures of history have largely given way to sophisticated new materials and methods of travel. Aircars have replaced ground vehicles, Spaceports have replaced Airports, and roads are simply extensions of the other public spaces in the utopian planned cities that most humans inhabit. Although short range teleportation systems and anti gravity systems exist they are not common, and are most likely to be found in Fi-Sci vessels.

Economy and Government : Despite the cost of the wars they have fought humanity is now living in a time of plenty and peace. Most people are happy to allow the larger issues of interspecies policy, military defence, exploration and the like to the Federation authorities, saving their democratic urges for the election of local officials and for local policies.

With copious technology and the most menial tasks taken over by automated systems the life of the average human is an easy one, happy to leave the difficult tasks of keeping their Federation safe to the specialists of the Galac Squad. If the price of peace is surrendering a little independence, and ignoring the soldiers left behind by the Thermal wars, then so be it.

Crime and Punishment : With the end of the Thermal Wars there are plenty of old weapons, and old warriors, going spare. With easy access to armaments, and the know-how to stay ahead of the law, Space Pirates are on the rise, and high-tech criminal organisations like the infamous Vegas Gang have a made a name for themselves, smuggling alien drugs, hijacking space liners, and running black markets from Earth to Sirius and back. Although the Federation tries hard to act against such criminals the lack of a unified law enforcement organisation (the Galac Squad has bigger fish to fry than smugglers or hijackers) makes it a losing battle. Bounty Hunters like the legendary Planet Tamer have stepped into the void, armed and licensed to kill so long as they get paid the going rate (1 million credits a job in the Planet Tamer's case).

Adventures in the Era of Expansion

The Era of Expansion is a time of high adventure and high technology, with deadly alien enemies and arcane threats always over the horizon. It is a time when humanity is at its zenith, master of all it surveys, but with enough mysteries and unexplored spots on the galactic map to keep things interesting.

There are plenty of opportunities for adventures set during the era of the Thermal wars, with characters taking the parts of soldiers, specialist infiltration squads, frontier settlers or ambassadors to the alien empires. Pick your favourite alien enemy and there will have been a war fought with them to set a story in, for an example have a look at the Odelotian war section in the Epic plots. You can play Space Squaddies, Special Ops troops, or deep space patrol officers.

There are just as many adventures to be had in the aftermath of the various wars, though of a less heroic tone. After every war there were forces left behind, prisoners of war, persecuted psychics, shunned mutants, or abandoned veterans. Players can take the part of old soldiers turned mercenary in alien conflicts, or bounty hunters defending colonists from space pirates (see the start of Planet Tamer), or if they are jaded enough they could *be* the space pirates. Another option is to play a covert team of veterans reactivated

by the military or the government for acts of sabotage or espionage. (e.g. 138 *The Raid on Rourke's Star*, 162 *The D Team* or 242 *The Psycho Squad*).

And for those looking for heroic adventure in deep space, look no further than the age of the Galac Squad and the Fi-Sci. You too can be a Hadron Halley, defending humanity from alien threats with quick thinking, arcane gadgets, scientific knowhow, quick fists, and exclamations like 'Jupe!' and 'Great Galaxies!'. The Terran Federation that the Galac Squad defends is truly the best of human culture, full of energy determination and optimism. Don't you want to defend it too?

The Cosmopolitan Era or 'Who Elected the Guy with Two Heads?'

Once upon a time Humanity was a young race looking to make its mark on a Galaxy full of Alien Empires. What followed were centuries of war and expansion, cultures that rose and fell, and alien threats that came close to wiping out the Human race once and for all.

Those days are now long gone. There is no more Human Space, or Terran Federation, or Empire of Mankind, there is now simply a Galaxy full of races

living in comparative harmony, with Humanity just one more race in the mix. If the Galaxy of previous centuries resembled the Wild West frontier it is now closer to a cosmopolitan metropolis, large enough to swallow diversity whole. Worlds are many, travel is easy, and technology is cheap. Human only worlds are now the backwater exception rather than the norm. Most people in the Galactic Era live shoulder to shoulder with as many aliens as humans.

Which is not to say that Humanity has fallen from importance, on the contrary humans have spread to every corner of the inhabited Galaxy and beyond. Human Imperialism, however, is long gone, and there are few worlds where the colour of your skin, or the number of your arms, is a factor in how successful you can be. Even computers are often given the same rights as any other citizens. It is an era of equality and diversity, but it also an age where the great ambitions of Terran culture have given way to the busy realities of a crowded future.

This era is ruled by the Galactic Federation, also known as the United Worlds, a loose confederation of inhabited worlds and space faring cultures. The Federation leaves most matters of government to the administrations of it's member worlds, stepping in only to prevent all out wars and to manage a few key Galactic structures, such as law enforcement, space lanes, and communications.

Of War and Peace

Galactic wars, to the relief of most sentient species, have gone the way of Galactic Empires; a thing of the past. The Galactic Era is not without conflict, wars that span star systems and set race against race, but the age of wars that consume whole cultures and threaten stars with destruction have gone the way of Hadron Halley and the Fighting Scientists. Few races now maintain world destroying fleets of Battleships and Star destroyers, and fewer still have access to the now outlawed strategic weapons that led to stalemate and genocide in previous centuries. Indeed few races have worlds of their own to defend!

What they do have are the crimes and criminals that beset any crowded and decentralised society; Strontilcite smugglers, black market gangs, backwater slavers, low city thugs and many many more. Where a hundred species mix in the confines of orbital domes and neon-lit metropoli violence flares and gangs take over.

The LEO

Enter the LEO, or Law Enforcement Officers. The Galactic Federation leaves most matters to individual planetary governments to handle, and the planets hand most of their problems in turn to the overworked LEO. The Legal Enforcement Agency is responsible for the majority of Law Enforcement matters throughout the Galaxy. Minor crimes are left to local security forces, but more significant offences, such as organised crime, piracy, smuggling and the like, are left to the LEO.

To help fulfil their role the LEO maintain sector houses and space stations throughout the Galaxy, each housing a number of officers with semi-independent jurisdiction. Smaller LEO offices make use of robots and cyborg officers, as well as anti-grav flyers, scout spacecraft and other high tech devices to extend their reach, but the archetypal LEO squad is always strapped for manpower, which benefits both the local criminals and the planetary authorities that don't have to pay higher LEO wages.

Given their limited resources, and wide remit, many LEO officers take the law into their own hands, pursuing vendettas and vanishing on deep space patrols for months at a time. Most officers who go rogue are quickly disavowed by the LEO, and may end up as wanted criminals themselves, if they don't keep to the legal strictures of being a bounty hunter. Some, however, like the famous half cyborg Carter, constantly skirt the edges of the law, building up a fearsome reputation amongst the criminal classes.

Investigators for Hire

Despite the hard work, and sophisticated equipment, of the LEO officers, many crimes simply fall under their radar. Petty crimes, robberies, domestics, and most of all missing persons are rarely investigated by the LEO, and local security forces are rarely of any help. If you've been a victim of such a crime, or your loved one has gone missing, then your best bet is to turn to a private investigator, often known as a Locator. Such Locators take on cases that neither the locals or the LEO's want to pursue.

The best Locators, such as the famous Mikal R. Kayn, are dogged investigators, working hard to solve any case they take. Others are little better than hired guns or assassins, making a lucrative living from interplanetary disputes and corporate espionage. Both types have become an integral part of life in the Federated Galaxy.

Key Locations

Most of the key worlds and places of the Era of Expansion are still of great significance in the Galactic Era, though the home worlds of most races are, like Earth, more of sentimental than economic importance.

Space City One or Vegas, as it is also known, is typical of the run-down space domes that litter the pan-galactic space lanes, acting as changing points for long distance flights. Low on both law and government Vegas is a haven for gamblers, outlaws and smugglers looking to trade their wares. Vegas is under human control, but many other similar space cities have been built by other races over the years. (See 173, *The Vegas Murders*)

The Midas Club : Both a place and an organisation, the Midas Club accepts only the Galaxy's richest businessmen as it's members, and wields a massive amount of influence on Galactic policy as a result. The Midas Club has its own planet, also known as Gordius.

Babalon : Babalon is a primitive planet inhabited by a fierce race of warrior humanoids. Respected throughout the Galaxy for their tenacity, toughness, and bloodthirsty skill with all forms of weapons the Babalonians often take work as mercenaries or bounty hunters. Babalonian halfbreeds are less well respected by their kind, and are found in more everyday jobs, such as bodyguarding.

New Earth : One of many worlds colonised by humans many centuries ago New Earth is the home of the notorious Mikal Kayn. New Earth's main city is New Moscow, a run down metropolis with little in the way of LEO presence. Beneath its streets is Netherworld, a lawless underworld of smugglers and outlaws that the New Moscow authorities know better than to mess with.

Technology & Culture

The Technology of the Galactic Era is best described as mature. Most devices considered experimental to the humans of earlier eras are now commonplace. Computers have the same intelligence level as people, space travel is common, energy weapons have replaced more primitive guns, robots are everywhere, and even teleportation is hardly unusual. Unlike previous centuries such exceptional technologies are no longer the province of the military or government forces, rather they are just another part of the common fabric of life in a cosmopolitan cosmos.

Space Travel : Space travel in the Galactic Era is as much an everyday occurrence as travel by ground car was to humans of ages gone by. It is not uncommon for someone to own their own space craft, though deep space vessels are a little less common for the average man on the street than interplanetary hoppers. Such vessels usually come with a sentient computer for navigation and operation of their hyper-drive engines. Manual control is rare. Most small ships are unarmed, relying on LEO patrols for safety on the busy space ways.

Military technology : Although many races still keep a few mothballed Battleships stashed on isolated moons and in space bases, and most have orbital defence stations and satellite nets, standing armies are now uncommon and the United Worlds takes a dim view of long range strategic weapons, such as anti-matter bombs, warp missiles, and nova inducers. Standing military units are, as a rule, merely special divisions of planetary Police forces, only a little better armed than their civilian colleagues. Where heavier firepower is needed most races turn to War-Meks, or mercenaries such as the Babalons.

Medical technology : Like the rest of United Worlds technology, medical treatments are now very advanced. Almost any injury can be treated with regeneration pods, with only the most severe nerve damage or limb loss requiring cybernetic implants. People can still die as easily as ever, and death is as final as it has always been, but most things short of death can now be cured. Deep space hospital bases provide a perfect sterile environment for robot doctors and surgeons to treat the most severe injuries and diseases.

Computers and Robots : In contrast to previous ages, where robots were rare and AI was distrusted, the Galactic Federation is full of mechanical men. War-Meks are used for combat in place of soldiers, and most homes come with servo robots and sentient home computers. Other areas dominated by robots are heavy labour, construction work, mining and the handling of dangerous materials.

Economy and Government : The Galaxy is a generally prosperous place, with sufficiently advanced technology and cheap enough power, that most races have a high standard of living. Surprisingly this often leads to depression and unemployment; there is simply not enough for all the billions of intelligent

beings to do with themselves. As a result all the vices of the idle thrive; gambling, prostitution, drugs, smuggling, murder and more. Ironically the affluence of the far future seems to have bred as much crime as the poverty of the far past.

Crime and Punishment : As described more extensively above the wars and conflicts of previous eras have largely been transformed into crimes and misdemeanours in the United Worlds. LEO officers keep a tight reign on the most serious crimes, such as slavery, weapons smuggling, murder and the like. Most citizens of the Galaxy feel generally safe in their homes, but nearly every city has its gang controlled areas and local authorities are often paralysed by bureaucracy.

Punishments for convicted criminals vary from world to world. Some favour imprisonment on penal planets, with forced labour in fuel mines not uncommon for more serious offences. Other planets have a more enlightened view, and favour re-education over incarceration. The LEO will only hold convicts on their space stations for short periods before repatriating them to an appropriate world, but a LEO officer is often forced to kill in the line of duty.

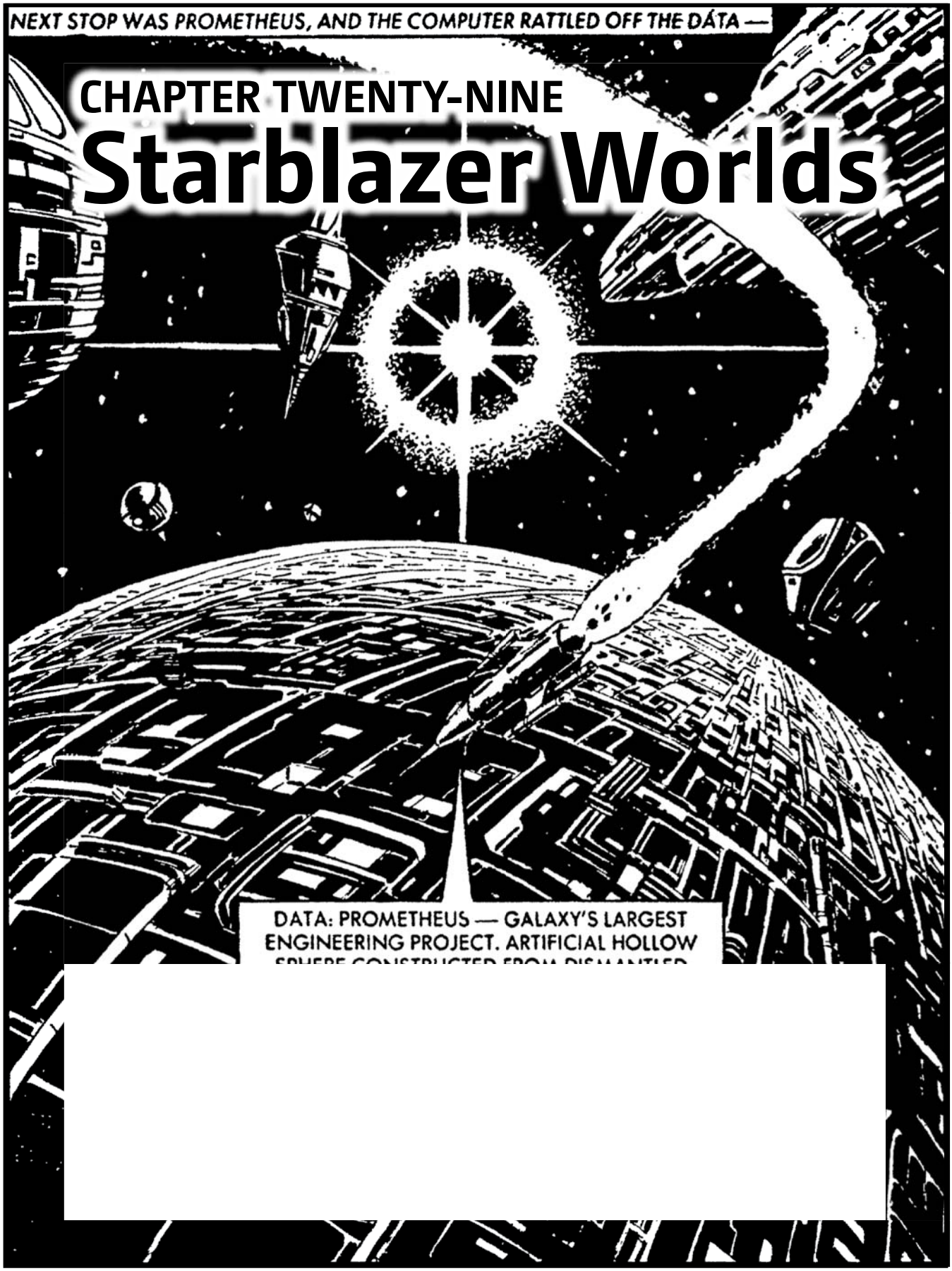
Adventures in the Galactic Era

The archetypal Galactic Era adventure revolves around criminals and crime, from one side of the law or the other.

LEO Officers make ideal characters for player groups, as small squads of semi-independent agents are often handed ships and sent off on dangerous duties. Many adventures are to be had hunting down people smugglers, fighting off space pirates, raiding underworld dens, dealing with terrorists and bringing law to isolated bases. Alternatively the United Worlds makes the perfect setting for a far future police procedural, revolving around a sector house, local gangs and inter officer relationships. If the LEO don't seem gritty enough you can do the same with local security forces as well.

On the opposite side of the law there are just as many opportunities for adventure. Players could be assassins for hire, mercenaries, or gang fighters defending their turf. Independent traders with a cargo spaceship often get involved in smuggling, blockade running, and even the odd bit of piracy when available. Bigger gangs in the underworlds of crowded planets offer opportunities for mafia style drama with a cast of a hundred different alien races.

Finally smaller groups might want to take on the role of a private investigator and his friends (Kayn for example is often accompanied by the Babalon fighter Cinnabar, space captain Mindy, and others). Investigator characters can sample all the sorts of adventures described above, mixing with the underworld and fighting criminals at the same time, all without being declared a rogue cop.


NEXT STOP WAS PROMETHEUS, AND THE COMPUTER RATTLED OFF THE DÁTA —
CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE
Starblazer Worlds
DATA: PROMETHEUS — GALAXY'S LARGEST ENGINEERING PROJECT. ARTIFICIAL HOLLOW

A Galactic Gazetter

Abraxas (Issue 64-***The Exterminator***). A planet that was used by the Jandar mining corporation. Climatically it was like a primitive Earth, and modern vehicles are banned there necessitating the use of native animal transport for getting around.

Abraxis (Issue 15-***Algol the Terrible***). The dark and forbidding world of Abraxis was the home of the immortal Starbarons, the despotic race that held the Galactic Frontier under its sway.

Acamar-Four (Issue 276-***Outworld***). Civil and military command centre of the tenth quadrant of the galactic line, Acamar Four is a busy planet. In addition to its civil spaceport it houses a naval Dockyard complete with all repair and upgrading facilities. However, despite its grand sounding title, this is not a particularly rich world. Crime, especially petty crime is common and the Navy do not keep a large naval flotilla present at all times

Akor (Issue 6-***Killer Robot***). Akor is an isolationist planet far out on the Galactic rim. It is ruled over by a Grand Leader who is the ruler of the planet. Akor at this time is dominated by a highly militaristic warrior caste, they are distinguished by their black uniforms and helmets and keep the rest of the populace in a state of fear, though they are opposed by a rebel faction of hillmen. Akor has one city, it's capital which has an architectural style resembling that of Rome. The city is ringed with high walls keeping wild beast and rebel out alike. The Starport is mainly used for Akorian military craft including atmospheric scouters. Visitors are not welcome on Akor, therefore it is uncommon to see non-Akorians there. The only place they would be seen is as slaves in the Gladiatorial games held for the sadistic pleasure of the ruling elite.

Alpha 858 (Issue 147-***Attack Force X***). A small barren planet with a breathable atmosphere. It has no remarkable features and no permanent settlements. Its only virtue is that it is a possible source of the valuable mineral Kylite. Geologically it is also unstable making it undesirable to inhabit for any length of time.

Alphon 6 (Issue 40-***Planet Tamer***). A lush paradise world that was colonised by settlers from the planet Earth. It lies out on the Galactic frontier. Since it is newly colonised there is no heavy industry or any large organised settlements. The vast majority of the world is therefore unspoiled.

Andrasta (Issue 35-***Lord of Jarkness***). Like Jarkness, Andrasta was an Earth settled colony that was invaded by the forces of the Titon empire and occupied.

Alterus (Issue 71-***Jaws of Death***). The Planet Alterus is home to the Varda race, an expansionist species under the rule of Vardon, their warlord. The atmosphere of the planet is 80% of Earths and is quite tolerable. Most of the planet is comprised of dense jungle, though there is one large walled city under the rule of the Varda. This has a lot of heavy industry using crude methods which nonetheless produce effective war machines. There is a slave section where prisoners are kept in appalling conditions. The largest part is the landing field where Vardon's fleet is kept at readiness.

Altra (Issue 178-***The Secret War***). A settlement was established on the planet Altra for some centuries by colonists from the planet Earth. At this time Earth had been contaminated, and the population settled on a wide variety of worlds. Altra was home to a race known as the Altrans who had a level of technology equivalent to about 17th-18th century Earth utilising cannon and basic rifles. The Earth colony was centred around one large castle and was never intended to be permanent. Much of the rest of the planet is a mixture of landscapes, most of which are rocky crags and plains.

Andos (Issue 89-***The Towering Turbulence***). The planet Andos was at one time home to the Kurtana, an extremely advanced but physically weak species. Years of study had made them incapable of fighting, so when the primitive natives attacked their fortress, their only option was to flee, utilising their fortresses advanced anti gravity system. The planet had effectively died by the Earth year 4383, with the native population rendered extinct through causes unknown, though since traces of the civilisation were found such as written records it can be assumed that the planet is still hospitable enough to visit.

Anglox (Issue 147-***Attack Force X***). The chief planet in the Sol 4 system, its capital is Solar City. A planet with varied terrain, it was the site of an attack by the hostile Zorg as it was also another planet with large deposits of the valuable Starship fuel Kylite. Much of the city was devastated and the Zorgs occupied the rest. The planet is riddled with cave networks that can be extremely dangerous.

Anhalees World (Issue 42-***The Immortals***). This planet with its Starport Anhalees Port is home to Alva Adames pharmaceutical drug empire. It is a commercially owned and operated planet.

Apora (Issue 99-***The Floating Cities of Nexios***). Apora is a gas planet which is clearly unsuitable for colonisation. Although there is a small surface core, this is still unsuitable. Apora served as a base for Nexios Magna Cities when renegade Nexions attempted to attack Earth. The mists of the gas planet were an ideal hiding place for the military force.

Arcos (Issue 38-***The Seeds of Doom***). Arcos is a duty free planet with a shady reputation and is known as a place where a lot of disreputable types of people congregate. Presumably this will mean smugglers, bounty hunters, mercenaries, petty crooks and the like. Arcos itself has an ultra modern Starport with all the facilities needed for any type of operation. Movements of residents and regular visitors are kept track of through the Citizen Location system.

Arcos (2) (Issue 69-***Nightmare Planet***). Arcos is a frontier planet belonging to Earth whose main economy is catering to the needs of the miners of Volkanite -- a precious mineral. Arcos has a large spaceport capable of performing most repair jobs on spacecraft from the mundane to the more serious. However, the planet has a dark side, with a large number of undesirables haunting the place which can make getting a reliable mining ship a rather risky operation.

Arcos (3) (Issue 98-***The Last Planet***) Situated on the borders of Earth territory, the planet of Arcos is a world with a good climate and is ideal for human habitation. Since this planet is on the border with the hostile Vorgan Empire, the planet is one of the main outposts on the Earth frontier. Arcos has a heavily fortified garrison reinforced with fighter craft and heavy ground support backing up a large ground contingent. In addition to this considerable force, the Garrison structure itself has a practically impenetrable shield. In addition to the planetary garrison itself Arcos's moon has an automated missile base which is programmed to intercept and destroy hostile targets.

Arenal (Issue 146-***Knight of Darkness***). A former colony of Earth, Arenal achieved independence but still had amicable relations with the Terran Federation. The society became a monarchy and the ruling King allied his planet with the Terran Federation which provided a mutual defence treaty. When the King was overthrown and murdered by the renegade Baron Tarb, assisted by the scientist Leonotus, Galac-Squad had to retake the planet. Arenal is still in a relatively primitive stage of development with little in the way of advanced technology. The main settlement is situated around the palace. Although there is no spaceport as such, there is an area where small to medium Starships can land though there are none of the standard facilities like refuelling. Outside the palace there are no real organised towns or cities and much of the planet surface is covered with dense jungle. The only other large structure is the research station at Manakor.

Argatan (Issue 239-***Desolation City***). The planet of Argatan has one large built up area called Desolation City, though it was once known by the name Glitter City. However the economy crumbled after the huge Ceetrax mine ran dry and the planet became a crime-infested backwater. There are hordes of violent gangs and casualties among the police force is high.

Argon-El (Issue 134-***Ambush at Argon-El***). A planet off the beaten track, it is covered with dense jungles. Although there is no intelligent life there is a large amount of native animal life, most of which is extremely dangerous. There are no settlements of any kind and no indications of any valuable minerals.

Arkos (Issue 36-***Deathship***) A desolate and dead world with no native life of any kind. The surface consists of bare blasted rock with absolutely no plant life. Arkos's only point of interest was that it concealed an underground base for the notorious barbaric pirate, Slokam the Terrible.

Asgard (Issue 122-***Alien Invasion***). Asgard is a desolate world with practically no vegetation. However, it houses a huge gas plant that supplies nearby Velga, a major Terran colony and outpost. The planet itself is classed as uninhabitable in as much that the colony is not self-supporting, relying on ferried supplies . Although not the most pleasant planet, the atmosphere is breathable. The warlike Bargez invaded Asgard both to seize its gas supply as well as a stepping stone to invading further colonies.

Astalia (Issue 9-***Lancer the Lawlord***). Astalia is an alien planet not under Earth control but Earth has mining rights there. Almost 100 light years from Earth. Largely a desert world, there is valuable minerals in the sand that makes it possible to manufacture strong Starship hulls. There is a variety of native life there, the dominant humanoid species have a development and culture equivalent to the 13th century Mongols, ruled over by a tyrannical warlord.

Asur (Issue 49-***Rigel Express***). The planet of Asur is the home of the species by the same name, a race of tall leonine humanoids who have aggressive designs on the planet Earth and it's colonies. Asur's capital is called Imperial City and the planet has a permanent fleet detachment in orbit to protect it. The capital city is a myriad of huge tall buildings with a mixture of military and civilian structures. The major military arsenal is just outside the main city and is heavily guarded.

Athanatos (Issue 42-***The Immortals***). The distant planet of Athanatos is the only source of the life extending drug Athanatine. It is processed from the purple grass that grows on the planetary surface. Apart from the presence of raw Athanatine there is little to recommend this world, especially as the planets sun is due to go into supernova state with 67 years.

Babalon (Various issues). Babalon is the homeworld of the Babalonian people, the two most well known inhabitants in the Starblazer universe are Cinnibar and Rulf. The capital city is known as Bazwun and is also the stronghold of the Wulfral, the head of the various tribal families of Babalon. Babalon itself is undergoing a transformation, having long been isolated from galactic affairs, its rich resources in various minerals has brought it into contact with various galactic corporations and brought some modernisation especially to the capital. Babalon however is a protected planet and is protected from outright exploitation from corporations. Nonetheless the recent contact has brought more modern technology including weaponry among other things into Babalon. The various families still largely live traditionally adhering to an almost feudal system. Bazwun city itself until recently was built on top of a Starship which brought the original colonists to Babalon. Whether this colony ship originated from Earth in its long ago expansionist era, or came from an alien civilisation is unknown. Outside the city, the terrain varied, with ranges of mountains, dense jungles and swamplands. Babalon is not a planet that should be explored by those of a nervous disposition as there are many wild beasts, so much so that the various families on occasion have to make sure their individual lands are kept clear. The Zengul is one such example, a large bipedal creature which is typically quite savage. Crime on Babalon is rare, in Bazwun itself the law is strictly enforced by the Royal Guard, and in the various family territories the law is enforced by the families themselves who, depending on who they are, are liable to be even stricter. The sole actual spaceport is in Bazwun City.

Baryon II (Issue 54-***The Torturer of Triton II***). Baryon II is an isolated desolated planet with the only reason for there being a settlement there is the existence of hyper-fuel pellets, the valuable Starship fuel. There is a small rudimentary Galac-Squad settlement present there under the command of a Sergeant and a small team of miners. Baryon II has no native intelligent life but there are a variety of unusual animal life forms. The vast majority of the planetary surface is jagged bare rock.

Beastworld IV (Issue 144-***The Sailfighters of Sol 7***). Beastworld IV is one of the planets dedicated to food production set up and administered by the Terran Federation. In addition to food production rare and endangered species are also sited here. The sole settlement also doubles as a quarantine centre for those beasts from other terraformed planets. This also gives access to a matter transporter. Like most food producing planets the terrain is lush, with the proper atmosphere conducive to optimum food production. Like other planets designated as food producers, the planet was perhaps initially less welcoming. Food producing planets are created where necessary through a three-stage terraforming process involving three gigantic robotic spacecraft. The Burner removes the old surface, the Seeder plants new seeds on the sterile surface and the Reaper starts the process of growth.

Bellerophon (Issue 92-***Space Assault Squad***). A sun blasted planet that was the sign of a conflict between Earth and the alien Zwart race due to the presence of the valuable mineral Adamtium. The

surface of the planet was so hot during the day that no living thing could survive, so robotic fighting vehicles were used by proxy powered by the rays of the sun. At night-time it is cool enough for squads to emerge, though this rarely happens as even the power of a flashlight is enough to set off the solar cells in an enemy vehicle.

Bessel. (Issue 59-***Starseeker Squad***) An Earth city-colony that covers an entire planet, the surface of the planet itself is naturally controlled and good climate is only ensure by a ring of orbital solar beaming towns which are in themselves small planets, though artificial in nature. Bessel itself is a densely populated planet but being on the Earth frontier it is vulnerable to attack such as the time the alien Kakrai attacked.

Beta Kordomai (Issue 62-***The Mask of Fear***). A backwater world with a high technology medical facility, used by unscrupulous medical officials to harvest organs from the peasants who thought they were getting free medical treatment. Presumably once the corrupt officials were arrested the centre prospered.

Beta Lucius (Issue 150-***Captains Choice***) A planet just over twice the size of Earth. It is home to be Lucian race, an aggressive advanced people who have their hearts set on conquest. The planet's gravity is much the same as Earth but the atmosphere is primarily methane making it unsuitable for extended visits by Earth people. The Lucians do not encourage visitors anyway and generally have a shoot on sight policy. The planet is heavily defended and militarised with a well guarded city and Starport.

Broke 4 (Issue 278-***Zero's Hour***) Broke 4 is the fourth planet of Broke's star, a planet that is inhabitable by human life. Due to a long standing border dispute it has the status of a Freeport, a port where Federation law does not apply. This makes it a planet where all types of crime can thrive.

Caben 93 (Issue 51-***Prisoners of Zorr***). A neighbouring planet of Zorr, the planet is highly advanced but appears to have no defences or armed forces of any kind. The people are peaceful and there are a number of large cities.

Cambo (Issue 183-***The Cyborg Chaser***). Cambo was the closest colony to Earth, and was taken over by androids after the Andcorp (Android Corporation), attempted to topple the Earth government. Despite the android takeover of Cambo, human control was quickly regained. The planet seemed hospitable enough with a single large city and an Andcorp manufacturing facility.

Capal II (Issue 161-***The Seeds of Madness***)– Located in the Arcturic system, this planet is situated in the Federated Galaxy. It is the sole source of Plasteen-a compound fuel that powers Starship engines. Therefore, it is extremely valuable as a strategic and economic location. Smuggling of this substance from this planet is common, though law enforcement officers tend to keep watch on the system. Ground defences consist of Quadropods, large four legged manned fighting machines that serve as defence forces in the main Starport.

Cargan (Issue 32-***The Machine Master***). Cargan is the homeworld of the primitive Corb people, a race that was once invaded thousands of years ago by the alien Slarns who enslaved them. The Corbs can sometimes seem a bit paranoid about archaeological expeditions in case they unsurface any harmful Slarn artefacts. The Corbs live in relatively primitive surroundings but are highly civilised despite their outward appearance. Near all Corb settlements are reminders of the Slarn occupation including mountain carvings.

Catraz (Issue 61-***Escape from Devil's Moon***). Catraz also known as Devil's Moon is a human penal colony with harsh working conditions. There is no atmosphere and conditions are made worse with the presence of a nuclear waste dump nearby. There is one docking facility, served by the freighters who bring in fresh supplies and convicts in Cryo-Freeze. The main distinguishing structure on the colony is the control tower.

Ceros (Issue 191-***Carter's Law***). Ceros V is a world situated light years from the major spacelanes. Despite having some colonies its main feature is that it is the home of a heavily fortified research and development complex belonging to Ryker Industries, headed up by the reclusive Carl Ryker. The R&D complex is situated in the middle of a desert region far from any other settlement.

Ceta V (Issue 7-***Holocaust Hogan***). A desolate blasted world without a breathable atmosphere. Used by illegal prospectors to try and mine ores, also notable for being the planet where the alien warlord Vassal was entombed deep within its surface by the pacifist Protectors. The planet itself

is of no significant size and has no permanent authorised settlements.

Ceti IV (Issue 227-***Rogue Cop's Return***). A human colonised world with an advanced civilisation. For the last fifteen years it has been in a devastating state of Civil War with no sign of either side winning. In desperation one side turned to the creation of supersoldiers using illegal genetic engineering methods creating 'werebeasts' from human beings.

Cetron 4 (Issue 97-***The Triangle of Terror***). The largest frontier world in use by the Terran Police Agency. Cetron 4 borders the area of space that forms part of the realm of the Octrian. A large Starport is based on this world.

Cetus (Issue 55-***Target Earth***). Cetus is home to the brutal warlike Cetians. The planet is ringed by an extensive field of large asteroids, some of which even have an atmosphere due to being part of a shattered planet. Cetus has an extensive early warning system that can easily pick up most standard space craft. The surface of Cetus is covered in the high technology and highly populated 'hive cities'.

Choth (Issue 162-***The D Team***). The homeworld of the Choth race, Choth itself is a blasted barren world which seems to be the result of the large amount of heavy industry present on Choth. The choth cities most distinctive features are the towering Cloudtouchers, large apartment and office blocks which reach hundreds of feet into the sky. Outside the cities the landscape largely consists of bare rocky areas dotted with various industrial and military sites.

Colonia, Holci and Monta (Issue 188-***The Infernal Triangle***). Regarded as legendary planets that might have held the origin of the human species, Colonia apparently existed some thousands of years before an inhabited Earth. It was peaceful, civilised and technologically advanced. There

THE GALAC-SQUAD BATTLECRUISER, BRADDOCK, WAS ON MANOEUVRES IN THE MORGYN SYSTEM . . .
BRIDGE CONTROL REPORTING — WE HAVE HYPER-BEAM FAILURE ON MORGYN III.

were a number of large cities including the holy city of Thermon, and the ancient city of Kub Ansar. According to legend the planet got involved in a war with its neighbours, Holci and Monta and was destroyed. Holci and Monta were apparently rivals with Colonia and a disastrous war erupted ending in the destruction of all three worlds, though legend says there were some survivors who managed to settle elsewhere.

Dalma (Issue 152-***Doom World***). The homeworld of the Dalmans, a technologically advanced people, though not as advanced as those of Earth. The government of Dalma is based on the absolute rule of Count Novmark, a petty dictator who holds the power of life or death over the general populace. The central city is dominated by what seems to be an outdated looking castle which also serves as Novmarks palace. Despite appearances however, the castle is reinforced with modern scanning equipment and automatic point defence systems. The countryside outside is largely a disputed area and there are rebel movements in the isolated hillside areas who also have formidable auto defences. One notable aspect of Dalma is that there is a slight variation in the atmosphere that caused the warlike Canis to lose the will to fight.

Cruta (Issue 4-***The Edge of Infinity***). The planet of Cruta beyond the Galactic barrier is the home of the warlike Crutan people. A race of large, heavily muscled humanoids, the Crutan economy is geared towards war and conquest. Their planet is largely unremarkable but it is heavily defended. All Starport facilities are geared towards military use as the Crutans do not trade, they just take what they want.

Darga (Issue 27-***The Drifters of Darga***). A medium sized jungle planet, Darga is uninhabited except for a Storage transit depot for the orbital matter relay stations which replaced awkward star freighters. The transit depot is the sole structure on the planet and consists of a central large structure with a large circular tarmac area for storing freight. The surrounding area consists of dense jungle. There appears to be little animal life on the planet either. One of the most notable forms of life are the Drifters. These large mushroom shaped plants drift in the winds of Darga. Beneath the plants themselves are a number of tendrils that can grab anything that gets in its way, including human sized prey. Darga was considered as somewhat of a backwater until the attempted Porgan invasion.

Daltair (Issue 116-***The Starstone***). Daltair was colonised by human settlers in 2284 and incorporated into the Earth Federation fifty years later. It enjoyed a brief period of prosperity being a stopover refuelling point for the huge galactic starliners but when in-flight refuelling became common Daltair became a backwater. Daltair has an orbital dock with a two way gravity lift to the surface. The planet was devastated when the city was struck by a meteorite of immense power called the Starstone. Daltair is ruled over by a monarchy system, at one time by a tyrant called Meakhan, cousin to the murdered king. Daltair was eventually turned over to military production under Khan's rule and the economy was ruined. The populace lived in fear while the military were used to suppress any dissent. Daltair eventually was largely abandoned after Khan's rule was brought to an end.

DB/907 (Issue 179-***Mandroid***). The planet is semi frozen but is rich in natural minerals therefore it is a draw for those who wish to get rich quick. The settlements are basic but adequate for the miners. There is a police presence in the shape of a single marshal. The colonists are generally of the rough and ready type so there are frequent petty crimes and bar fights. There was an alien civilisation present on this planet about 40,000 years before, when the sun in the planetary system went supernova causing a shift in its alignment sending it into a perpetual ice age.

Delta (Issue 63-***Lords of the Wilderness***). The planet Delta is home to the Deltan race, a race of squat humanoid who typically dress in hooded robes. The Deltans were confined to the planet after long ago losing a war to a race from the planet Andromeda. The planet is surrounded by what looks like a flame belt which is in actuality a thermo force-field. The planet lies many light years off the normal space lanes and is unknown to most spacers. The planet is not particularly hospitable, being largely an arid desert planet. The only settlement is a single large fortress-city inhabited by the Deltans. There are isolated automatic monitoring posts which have been left in place by the Andromedan people manned by androids. Unfortunately after so many years the androids

cannot always tell the difference between Deltans and other species.

Dendra (Issue 88-***Terror Planet***) The planet of Dendra is unique in the galaxy and is constantly monitored by the Ecology Corps. It is distinguished by having trees up to ten miles high, and some are estimated to be over a million years old. A watch is kept for both forest fires and to maintain the precious balance between too much and too little carbon dioxide. Dendra City is the main settlement and the Starport facilities suit small craft which are controlled by an automated landing facility. All the cities are built in a retro style sympathetic to the surroundings.

Denspa (Issue 145-***The Caves of Crystal Carbon***). A planet with no intelligent life, it however has a good variety of wild, but non-hostile animal life. The planet surface is also covered with a mixture of jungle, forest and mountainous areas. There is a settlement however, of illegal miners from the planet Capricornus. A cave within this settlement showing stores of valuable artefacts and the remains of some dead bodies suggests that this planet once housed a long extinct civilisation.

Destra (Issue 41-***Assault on Destra***). A peaceful Earth colonised world There are not many colonists on the entire planet and there is no garrison of defence forces, instead relying on a peoples militia. Destra has a small Starport with gun posts as its main defence. There are no permanent stationed fighter craft. The Mayflower, the original colony ship that brought the settlers to Destra is in planetary orbit.

Devils Island. (Issue 208-***Planet of the Dead***). An Earth type planet with a pleasant atmosphere, it is unsettled by those of a lawful disposition. The planet is monitored by a heavily armed law enforcement battlestation from orbit. Devil's Island is a penal colony where the inmates are basically left to their own devices. After decades technology is low tech, and there seems to be various tribal style factions.

E-Eridani (Issue 206-***Battlewagon***). Whether this planet actually existed is a matter of some debate. The ice moon Ganymede was apparently invaded by lizard men from this planet necessitating a military response. The war lasted many years and cost horrendous amounts of casualties. It turned out that both sides were actually Earthmen told the other side were the invaders. Sealed suits and orders to destroy enemy fortresses to prevent 'contamination' kept this secret for many years. This whole sham was to try and absorb some of Earths excess population problems. Whether the planet of E-Eridani existed at all or was just a fabrication of Earth is unknown.

Edena (Issue 33-***The Lost Planet***). Edena is one of the settlements of the Planet Earth which by this time had become a myth. Edena is headed up by a royal family who are the sole citizens compelled to undergo military training. Edena is largely peaceful, though the capital city is ringed with a lethal automatic defence system capable of repelling most attacks. The planet has an ideal climate for settlement and the defence system and most power needs are supplied by the Territe generator.

Eptiran (Issue 106-***Space Warrior***). Epitiran is a planet in the Earth settled Gandal system. The Gandal system was once at war with the alien Jakal people and even 100 years later, Earth maintained patrols in the area watching out for Jakal incursions. The planet of Eptiran was wild but covered in dense overgrown jungle. It had a breathable atmosphere but had no settlements as there were planets with better attractions nearby. Unknown to the Earth men, the planet had a substance in its atmosphere that allowed rapid regeneration and could cause near immortality.

Ero (Issue 135-***The Lost Patrol***). The planet of Ero is a wind-blasted desolate planet with hostile creatures in the shape of the Vivipods, extremely hostile flesh eaters. The planet of Kliss exiled traitors to this planet where they were not expected to last long. The exiles dug deep finding edible fungus and were able to survive where they set up a base using captured fighter pilots after luring them down with a fake distress call. The planet has absolutely nothing to recommend it.

Esemtee (Issue 166-***The Clone Ranger***). A transport planet, it has a large number of private shipdealers and is a transport hub. (Possible Scottish in-joke here as prior to Stagecoach buses there was a group called SMT (Scottish Motor Transport))

Eterus V (Issue 18-***Abandon Earth***). Eterus V was a planet used by the surviving inhabitants of Earth to resettle after the devastating attack by the Vemlim forces led by Varras. The planet was in most ways

GENERAL LARZ SWIFTLY ESTABLISHED AN EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE ON A TERRAN WORLD AND WAS SOON JOINED BY HADRON HALLEY, THE MOST EXPERIENCED OF THE FIGHTING-SCIENTISTS, AN ELITE BRANCH OF GALAC SQUAD.
WELL,HADRON. WHAT DOES FI-SCI MAKE OF THIS ONE?
I'VE GOT TO ADMIT WE'RE BAFFLED.

similar to that of Earth in terms of weather patters and temperature.

Ethor (Issue 34-***The Seas of Samor***). The planet Ethor itself is not important, but the second moon is the site of the Xenobium mines, the mineral that is the mainstay of the Samorian power.

Ferissa (Issue 141-***Spaceroamer***). Another of the Goraxian worlds, it was attacked by the Parovinn Republic. The Goraxian planets have a rather old fashioned style of architecture though it is obvious that theirs is a high technology society. There is a large spaceport present. The local mode of public transport is the anti-grav disc which is a large disc with an anti gravity generator. It can go fairly quickly if needed but becomes more difficult to control.

Fratri (Issue 4-***The Edge of Infinity***). The planet of Fratri beyond the Galactic Barrier is a prime source of Starship fuel. Unfortunately the planet is subject to constant devastating raids by the Crutans. The Fratri people live in modest villages and live a fairly simple life and are not militaristic. In contrast, the hill people led by their leader Gabon actively resist the Crutan occupiers.

Galatea (Issue 177-***The Midas Mystery***). Home to the Robomex corporation headed up by Quin Terrill. This is the galaxy's largest manufacturer of robotics. The manufacturing plant is largely automated and therefore there is not a large human presence on the planet.

Galliphola (Issue 24-***Avenging Angel***). Galliphola is a planet that seems to have been part of Earth's sphere of influence. They rose up against Earth and the rebellion was crushed, causing a deep seated resentment against Earth. The Gallipholans are a race slightly taller than the human norm, with a militaristic government. Galliphola itself has a number of cities, the largest space port is Puris. Puris itself is a cosmopolitan city with a large mixture of alien species which means there is a large transient population. The streets are heavily patrolled by Gallipholan military guards, but there are a large number of shady back alleys and streets that any number of crimes can happen largely unnoticed. Puris also has a large number of more seedy bars and markets. There is also an extremely deep Trypzium mine that was reopened by the Gallipholans after it had originally been closed

after the rebellion was put down by Earth. Outside Galliphola's cities there is a varied terrain largely consisting of forested areas inhabited by a variety of dangerous creatures.

Glan (Issue 103-***Robots of Death***) Glan was once a technologically advanced world, but in the 1000 years since they fought the Arctura, they have regressed. Still fairly advanced the world is moderately busy as it sits near some major trading lanes but it is considered somewhat of a backwater. A large part of the surface is desert, dotted with ancient pyramids constructed by the ancient Glan people.

Glasis V (Issue 174-***The Terminator***). A desolate Earth administrated world. It is home to a number of mining complexes and was also intended as the springboard for an invasion of Earth territory by the warlike Ellon. The planet is in an almost permanent state of winter-like conditions. The main settlement and spaceport is also home to the head of planetary law enforcement known as a Judge. Also assigned there are a number of the almost unstoppable law enforcement robots known as Terminators. When Judge Drax was in charge of the settlement he exiled those who disagreed with him under threat of death by the use of collars that are impossible to remove except by the Judges badge. The collars mount explosives.

Gog (Issue 110-***The Tomb of Tara***). A penal asteroid used by, but not necessarily administered by Earth (This is never made clear in the issue), Gog is subject to blistering heat from a nearby sun which is so intense that human beings cannot survive the hard labour that they are subjected to for long. The colony was destroyed by Tara when he was accidentally released after the colony was attacked by forces from the planet Trigia.

Gondwane (Issue 15-***Algol the Terrible***). The frontier world of Gondwane is a major population centre The main city houses a major Starport and is ringed with hotels and other tourists centres. There is another more isolated area of Gondwane, the arctic settlement of Hammerfest which is noted for its lawlessness.

Gordius (Issue 177-***The Midas Mystery***). Situated in the Frigia system, the planet Gordius is a human colony that is most notable for being the headquarters of the Midas Club, an exclusive social club that is available to join by invite only, and only credit billionaires are eligible for membership.

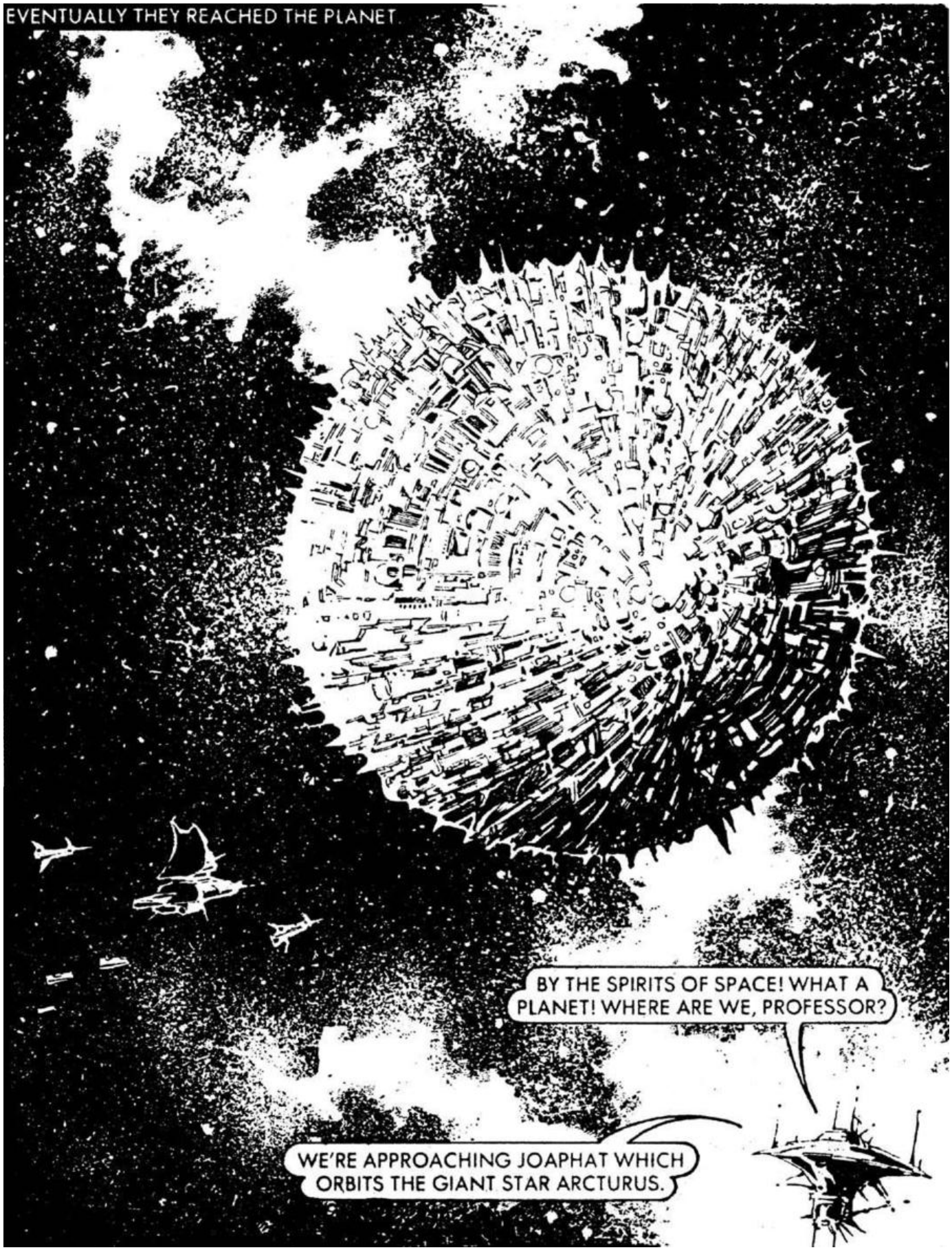
Havena (Issue 268-***Outworld War***). A planet colonised round about the year 3000, it is the second planet of the system and attracted settlers largely made up of Tellurian Mongoloid stock who set up a society based on tribal lines. The level of technology is not advanced by the tribes are civilised if a bit wary of outsiders. The planet was largely ignored until the discovery of valuable minerals many years later. The reason the planet was largely ignored till then because nine-tenths of the planets surface is covered by swamps or jungle. The main settlement of the later settlers who are harassing the original settlers is called Boomsville and is also a Starport.

Hera (Issue 90-***Return of the Planet Tamer***). Hera is a medium sized world where the majority of the surface is water. Much of the ocean depths remained unexplored until the invention and subsequent construction of the Aquatrain, a high speed luxury transport link around the planet. The planet is ruled under a presidential system. Hera has two moons, one of which, Doaz was used as a base of operations by the criminal Kapo.

Horizon (Issue 126-***Alien Battleship***). A habitable but deserted world that was once a large colony of Earth. Ruins show an ancient Starport and various landing spots. This planet was once the staging post for the launch of Earth colony vessels.

Icon (Issue 163-***Headhunter***) An artificial world with no permanent population. It was originally used as the training ground for the Moderators, a group of law enforcement agents. However, it was opened up for commercial use as well, in the same way that business in the present day book paintball games. The majority of the terrain simulates dense jungle planets with a large amount of swampland. There are one or two aid stations on the surface.

Inged 7 (Issue 24-***Avenging Angel***). A dead planet that was formerly used by Earth for mining the mineral Xenan. By the time of the story the planet had been mined out for some time. The terrain was largely barren and the planet never served any other purpose. The only settlement on the planet was a small group of accommodation buildings that had been used for the miners. The planet itself was destroyed when Acer Angel decided to test the weapons on his new ship, the Mark II Angel.


EVENTUALLY THEY REACHED THE PLANET
BY THE SPIRITS OF SPACE! WHAT A PLANET! WHERE ARE WE, PROFESSOR?
WE'RE APPROACHING JOAPHAT WHICH ORBITS THE GIANT STAR ARCTURUS.

Inos (Issue 35-***Lord of Jarkness***). Inos, like Jarkness and Andrasta were colonised by Earth settlers. These three planets were relatively close to each other and developed along similar lines. There were plans in place for the Titon to invade Inos however, Lord Kain of Jarkness helped thwart this attempt.

Ithaca (Issue 127-***Death Reaper***). A planet with a large population. The main Starport Ithaca Central is a fairly new area, the old orbital Ithaca East orbital Starport having been closed but still remaining intact in orbit. There are a variety of industries on Ithaca, catering to the various trade that comes in and out, as Ithaca is a trade hub sitting on the junctions of 12 starlanes.

Jarkness (Issue 35-***Lord of Jarkness***). Jarkness was an earth colony under the rule of a monarchy. The planet was highly advanced with a modern city, Starport and infrastructure. It's inhabitants lived in peace and prosperity until Jarkness came into contact with the militaristic Titons. Titon demanded unconditional surrender, but Jarkness resisted. The Jarkness spaceforces were no match for the Titon cruisers and endured twenty two years of occupation.

Joaphat (Issue 29-***The Moonstealers***) Home planet of the militaristic Joaphs. The Joaphs are a society built on conquest and resource acquisition. Their society is ruled by warlords who are in turned ruled by Tak-50, a giant computer who acts as de facto head of state and dictator. Joaphat has long ago exhausted it's own natural resources and has since resorted to scavenging other star systems to fuel its war machine. Planets and small moons are destroyed and all valuable minerals extracted by blasting apart the target with a chain of demolition charges and the most valuable remains are salvaged. Joaphat itself is covered entirely by a gigantic city, there are no areas of countryside, and few, if any natives animals. The majority of the industry on planet is geared towards war, and all manners of methods are used to fuel the war industry no matter how crude.

Kaliban (Issue 141-***Spaceroamer)***. One of the Goraxian worlds and the least important, Kaliban is uninhabited and has no life of any sorts. There is no trace of settlements at all.

Kalis (Issue 26-***Alien Contact***). A temperate planet inhabited by two main races, both of which are humanoid and look, externally at least identical to humans. These two races are the Krahls, who are more militaristic and are the dominant force on the planet. The more peaceful Harods were oppressed by the Krahls until the arrival of Matt Crane and the crew of the SPV Rover. There are a number of aggressive creatures outside what seems to be the sole main city including the large reptilian Xilgs, though there are also the more peaceful and intelligent Maku. Because of the large number of creatures the main city of the Krahls is ringed by an energy fence.

Ka-Lor (Issue 66-***The Pirates of Ka-Lor***). The planet of Ka-Lor is an isolated planet off the main space lanes and is home to a number of settlements of varying types. The planet is widely known as the world where people who are not interested in outside contact live. The main city is made up of buildings of an elaborate design with minarets and 'onion dome' design buildings as seen in Middle eastern countries and Russian cities. This city originally belonged to the tribe of Lor, but they were displaced by the pirate band of Captain Teach who chased the inhabitants into the wild. The city has been modified to accept pirate spacecraft but the external appearance of the buildings is largely unchanged. To the west of the city lies the Mountains of Ka, a mountain range reputed by tribal legend to house the resting place of Merlan, a heroic figure from Lor legend.

Kalos (Issue 53-***Samurai Warrior***). A small planet on the galactic frontier, often a gathering place for ex soldiers displaced after the Galactic war. Many of these ex-soldiers hire themselves out as mercenaries.

Kandron B (Issue 237-***Rough Justice***). Kandron B is situated in the cluster of worlds known as the Zwerbin sector. It is the largest planet of that system. It's main system is Kandrobad. The main city is a bit run down but the level of crime in general is not too bad, mainly confined to domestic incidents and petty theft. One of the main features on the planet and indeed the thing that makes it infamous is that it plays host, whether voluntarily or not, to the Kamikaze 9000. An illegal 9000 mile road race on the Zankral hyper route. A large desert is situated in the hinterlands and is also home to a state of the art police training range.

Kanthus (Issue 58-***Pyramid Power***). A frontier world with a rough and ready reputation. Security guards tend to shoot first and ask questions later. The planet has a variety of industries though it is mainly lower technology.

Keeron (Issue 33-***The Lost Planet***). Keeron was settled around the same time as Edena, though in contrast to Edena's lush climate, Keeron was in a state of permanent frost. The Territe generator however warmed the atmosphere as the rest of the planetary conditions were perfect. Unlike Edena, there was little in the way of automatic defences though Keeron maintained a decent sized standing army and space force.

Kella II (Issue 24-***Avenging Angel***). A desolate planet thought to be uninhabited by intelligent life. The planet consists of jagged rock landscapes blasted by intense sand storms. There are some traces of life, but this is limited to animal life including the fiercely carnivorous Rokas. The only time there was any intelligent life was when there was an underground base where Arkans, aliens hostile to Earths interests, exchanged fighters with Galliphola, a race with an antagonistic bent towards Earth for some of the Gallipholan's Trypzium, a valuable fuel that powers all aspects of Starships.

Kielgoth and Hexalyn (Issue 205-***The Hexalyn Location***). Both these planets are classed as unremarkable having no distinguishing features, however a bloody war between the two was causing problems in the surrounding areas of space. The daughter of the Emperor of Kielgoth and the son of the King of Hexalyn are apparently marrying in an attempt to stop this bloody conflict. Both worlds have modern cities with all the necessary facilities needed. There are tourist attractions on Kielgoth like the immense waterfalls.

Kitep (Issue 131-***The Killing Ground***). This planet was the frontline in the war between the Terran Federation and the warlike Krell Empire. The planet was largely desolate but was the site of two large fortresses, one for each site. The intervening landscape was dotted with various weapons emplacement.

Knorus (Issue 6-***Killer Robot***). Knorus is a barren frontier world under Earth's sphere of influence. It is a rough-hewn planet with a lively frontier atmosphere. It is also the site of a decently sized Starport where small freighters land frequently. The Starport, for some reason, forbids night-time take offs.

Koga (Issue 91-***The Acid Seas of Koga***). Home planet of the Kogan race, the planet has a unique natural defence. The planet has an electromagnetic core whose strength can be artificially boosted causing intense pain and also neutralising many weapons systems. The planet is rocky, and has one moon, named by Earthmen "Devils Moon", this houses a military prison camp. This moon has a single pillar of rock which rises above the corrosive gaseous atmosphere. The camp has a notorious reputation among Earthmen.

Korad (Issue 17-***The Caverns of Korad***). Korad is a desolate dead world with an atmosphere similar to Earth's but an unstable planetary structure making it unsuitable for colonisation. Korad has no real features of interest. It has giant bats as a native life form and there is some water present, but even this is not enough to make it a welcome place to live. The warlike Zarons used Korad as a base using Korads maze of natural caverns and expanding on them to construct a huge network of armaments factories, storage depots, spacecraft launch facilities and other military complexes. These depots were dotted throughout the planet and represented a major threat to Earth's planetary security until they were destroyed.

Kreege (Issue 62-***Terror Tomb***). An isolated, hostile and desolate planet in the Venceti starfield. The planetary atmosphere is highly corrosive being comprised of acid. The surface is bare, mountainous rock with no vegetation of any kind and no native life forms. The planet was the subject of a terraforming expedition by Galac-Squad to provide a usable planet for a base to combat the pirate attacks in the sector.

Kreel (Issue 144-***The Sailfighters of Sol 7***). A planet within Earth's sphere of influence, it is made up of dense jungle and was used by the Tion Empire to hide a taskforce. The planet was mist shrouded making it ideal for the Tion's purposes. Tion plans were foiled when the surface of the planet was scourged by a Burner, the robotic spacecraft which is the first stage of the terraforming process into a food production world.

Krygor (Issue 194-***Cabel and the She Warrior***). The planet of Krygor is run by a warrior like matriarchal society in which the men are effectively second-

class citizens. The culture itself seems fairly advanced, possessing powerful light speed capable Starships.

Largos (Issue 56-***The Sleeping Legion***). Largos is a distant world that is the home of the warlike Larg race. The planet of Largos long ago lost it's sun and therefore the planet is in an almost permanent state of darkness. The lack of a sun means the invasion plans of the Largs were put on hold due to their need for neutrino radiation.

Larynelle (Issue 141-***Spaceroamer***). Larynelle was the home planet of the Artificers, an ancient and now long extinct race who invent miraculous feats of technology and hand them out to various worlds regardless of their political allegiances and regimes. By the time of the story, Larynelle seemed uninhabited and the factory of the Artificers was underground beneath a desolate blasted surface. The factory was kept manufacturing by robots of amazing technology.

Markhett (Issue 116-***The Starstone***). Markhett is a large artificial world situated in the middle of the trading spacelanes. It is extremely busy with a large transient population and new ships arriving and departing all the time. It is a hub of trade with trade routes going almost anywhere.

Matar-4. (Issue 202 ***Lord of the Far Planet***, Issue 229 ***Solo's Quest***). A planet colonised by settlers from Earth. Now having a protected status where Galactic police will not interfere due to civil war occurring some centuries past, involving the use of nuclear weapons. Therefore the sale of high technology weapons is forbidden. Much of the planet is inhabitable however, and is indeed quite hospitable. There are no unusual weather patterns, but the large cities are radioactive no-go zones. Instead there are isolated more primitive settlements largely ruled over by various petty warlords.

Larda (Issue 91-***The Acid Seas of Koga***). A Kogan world and fuel depot. It was also the site of a large Kogan city. The fuel depot was destroyed by Earth commandos after a decoy raid on the city. The tectonic conditions enabled self-propelled earthquake bombs to topple most of the city.

Mafos (Issue 119-***Cosmic Commandos***) Home to the race of the same name, the Mafos, under the leadership of Donato, specialised in extortion and protection rackets. This was enforced by planting lethal planet killing bombs on frontier human settlements. The planet of Mafos itself is highly advanced with an impressive infrastructure and an ultra modern capital city. The planet is heavily defended with a permanent fleet in orbit and others on constant standby. Donato's main headquarters is isolated from the city and is protected by a moat and guarded by a heavy security presence. This HQ is but a shell concealing a high speed ship that can be used to escape, or even pursue an enemy.

Magnia (Issue 107-***The Magnon Marauders***). Magnia is the primary homeworld of the Magnon race, and is in a similar state of development to that of Earth. It is in a stage of colonial expansionism and has a considerable starfleet. The planet is ruled over by the Drey, a monarchical position. The planet has a population of approximately 1000 million and is densely populated.

Mako (Issue 125-***Saber the Slayer***). The planet of Mako was an early ally of Earth and entered into a mutual defence pact with it. Despite the inhabitants looking human, the Mako people are not the same species. Mako was valuable to Earth due to its supply of Pretane, a valuable fuel. The planetary surface is a mixture of dense forest and rocky mountain ranges. The Mako people possess modern technology with a retro look, and although they might be regarded as superstitious, they are effective warriors. The planets frozen north for many years remained unexplored until the invasion of the Rakka, where they concealed the majority of their invasion force.

Melkor (Issue 73-***Fear on the Spacelanes***). A competitor to Tryax for the deep space freight contracts, the Melkorians are an economically poor planet where the oridinary people live in poverty. Only the military, which is also the ruling government, prosper. Paranoia and misinformation are used to keep the populace in line. There are however rebel factions wanting to bring democracy to Melkor.

Mephisto (Issue 30-***The Positronic Cannon***). A world located deep in the Legrange cluster there are no formal settlements as the galactic logs regard it as uninhabited. The planet was a base however for a large mercenary band who had their base deep in the jungle. This base consisted of a number of prefabricated buildings powered by solar panels and a medium sized landing field capable of taking

a Sagassan Battle Cruiser.

Milo's World. (Issue 52-***The Mask of Fear***). An otherwise unremarkable human colony it was taken over by a corrupt governor who had reconstructive surgery after being part of a group that destroyed a planet purely for its resource value. Milo's World also had a moon, the Alpha Moon Death colony, formerly used for hard-bitten convicts it was used to exile political prisoners who harvested radioactive ore under horrendous working conditions.

Minora (Issue 7-***Holocaust Hogan***). A world bombarded by the forces of Vassal the Cruel. After this battle Vassal was captured. At the time of Holocaust Hogan the world is long dead, and is uninhabited Covered by large craters and other signs of a long ago battle, it seems that the atmosphere, or what is left of it is no longer breathable by humans. Although the surface is bare, there is an underground complex from the time of the Protectors housing their last warship.

Minraud (Issue 76-***The Mind of Meredith Morgan***). A planet with a climate broadly similar to Earth, Minraud is a hostile power and backs terrorist actions against Earth. The planet is ringed with orbital detection grids and weapons posts making it difficult for an unauthorised intruder to gain access to the planet. The planet itself has a number of smaller towns in addition to the big cities. Like most planets there are teenage gangs that cause trouble but no more so than anywhere else.

Mongros (Issue 43-***Nowhere World***). A vast ice covered world that appeared in Earths solar system. Apparently uninhabited, it was defended by a comprehensive defence system. The inhabitants were the warlike Mongron people whose sun had been long destroyed. They intended to 'shunt' Earth out of its orbit replacing it with the planet Mongros, but fortunately a team of commandos prevented this.

Multiways (Issue 262-***Cobra***). A vast artificial commercial world and crossroads for trade. The various robotic freighters within this busy spaceport are of an extremely unusual and curious design harking back to a retro look. The population of the city is constantly in flux due to the constant turnaround of freighter traffic but there is a large permanent population which is catered for through the use of artificial parks.

Mursa (Issue 36-***Deathship***). Mursa is an unusual planet. The main landmark was the great plain of Beselrijj, where once a mighty ocean had been, the lack of water had created an unusual marbled flat plain. The planet was home to the diminutive and advanced Gurlag people. Unfortunately, Slokam's destruction of nearby giant asteroid Z-89 upset the balance of the planet rendering it uninhabitable.

MX-7 (Issue 96-***The Promised Planet***). A planet lying in the Badlands between the Terran Federation and the Kraal Empire. The planet is hostile to human colonization, but despite this it was offered by the Terran Authorities to the crew and passengers of colony ship Voyager 124 both because all suitable planets were already claimed by the Terran Federation and as a way for the Terran Federation to extend its influence. Weather patterns are hostile with lower temperatures. There are also crystalline lifeforms that can 'devour' a human and strip him (or her) of their skin and nutrients leaving just a clothed skeleton.

Mynos (Issue 57-***Galactic Lawman***) An inhospitable planet with no native life, it is however rich in valuable minerals. The blasted surface is home to a penal colony administered by the planet Tara who send all their criminals there on hard labour sentences. The settlement is rudimentary at best with the guards treating the prisoners brutally. The spaceport at the colony is small as there is no need for a large facility since minerals are 'shrunk' by the use of an on-site matter condenser and the process reversed on Tara itself.

Mynos III (Issue 181-***Death Trek***). Mynos III was the battleground between the Earth force and the hostile Carthan aliens. Both sides made extensive use of chemical and biological weapons making the air unbreathable. The Mynos people were the natives to the planet and wanted neither the Earth Defence Forces nor the Carthans there, and fought both. The planet has a wide variety of terrain ranging from open plains, primeval swamps, to mountain ranges and volcanic ranges. There are a number of abandoned cities that were built in the days before the war started.

Netherworld (Issue 194-***Cabel and the She Warrior***). Netherworld (not to be confused with the subterranean city in the Kayn issues), is an inhabited planet that has a very unsavoury reputation.

Populated by thieves, murders, sadists, terrorists and arsonists. It seems to have no organised law enforcement and visitors are advised to be well armed at all times. It is also home to the infamous Vytronian Slavers. The planet has a formidable defence system. Large areas of the main city are fairly advanced with the cities elite (who are also the biggest crooks), living in relative comfort though there are large numbers of more slum-like areas. The central attraction to visitors is the massive Tradedome where literally anything can be bought and sold. For those desperate to escape notice, the city has a maze of duct systems but this is extremely hazardous as they are patrolled by automated robots known as duct bugs which clean the sewers and kill intruders.

Noir (Issue 97-***The Triangle of Terror***). The planet of Noir is on the other side of the Vegan triangle. The planet is highly advanced with a sophisticated defence screen in place around the planet. The Noirians allied with a force of renegade Octrians in an attempt to invade beyond their side of the Vegan triangle. Noir seems to be a standard Earth type planet with a pleasant climate and atmosphere.

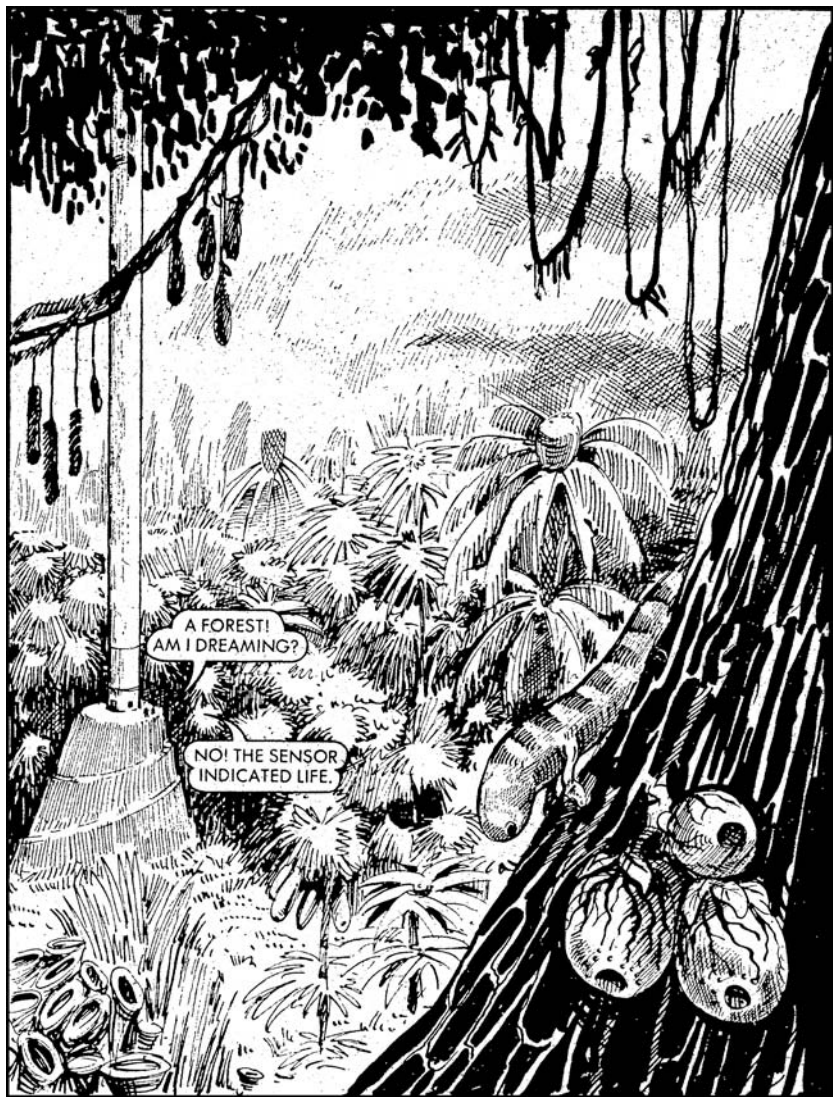
Notrop (Issue 166-***The Clone Ranger***). Home to a top secret weapons Research and Development station. It was the site of a massacre of a Space ranger force and the theft of a dangerous matter converter.

Oceania (Issue 102-***The Siege of Seabed City***). A water world, it has nonetheless been settled by human colonists. There are large underwater cities with huge populations. Access by spacecraft is limited to smaller ships which land on retractable landing towers which are then sealed against the pressures of the ocean. Each inhabitant also is equipped with an inflatable bubble to serve as a life capsule in the event of flooding.

Octria (Issue 97-***The Triangle of Terror***). Octria is a planet with a similar climate to that of Earth. The Octrians themselves seem to be a more militaristic people than the Terrans. The issue states that there has been a war in the past but no background is given. The Starport is highly advanced and the Octrians possess powerful pursuit craft.

Ohio (Issue 30-***The Positronic Cannon***). Ohio is an Earth colony In the Legrange cluster. Colonised quite early on in Earth's expansionist period it has a large class A Starport with all major facilities. This Starport is also Ohio's primary city. There is a large transient population due to the large number of merchant ships and passenger liners.

Oltair (Issue 39-***The Overlords of Oltair***). Colonised in 2140 by settlers from the planet Earth, Oltair is a planet which is extremely suitable for human settlement. There only seems to be one main settlement on the planet comprising a decent sized city and spaceport. Oltair is isolated and off the main spacelanes, so much so that when the Raba invaded nearly two centuries after it was settled. By this time the remainder of the human



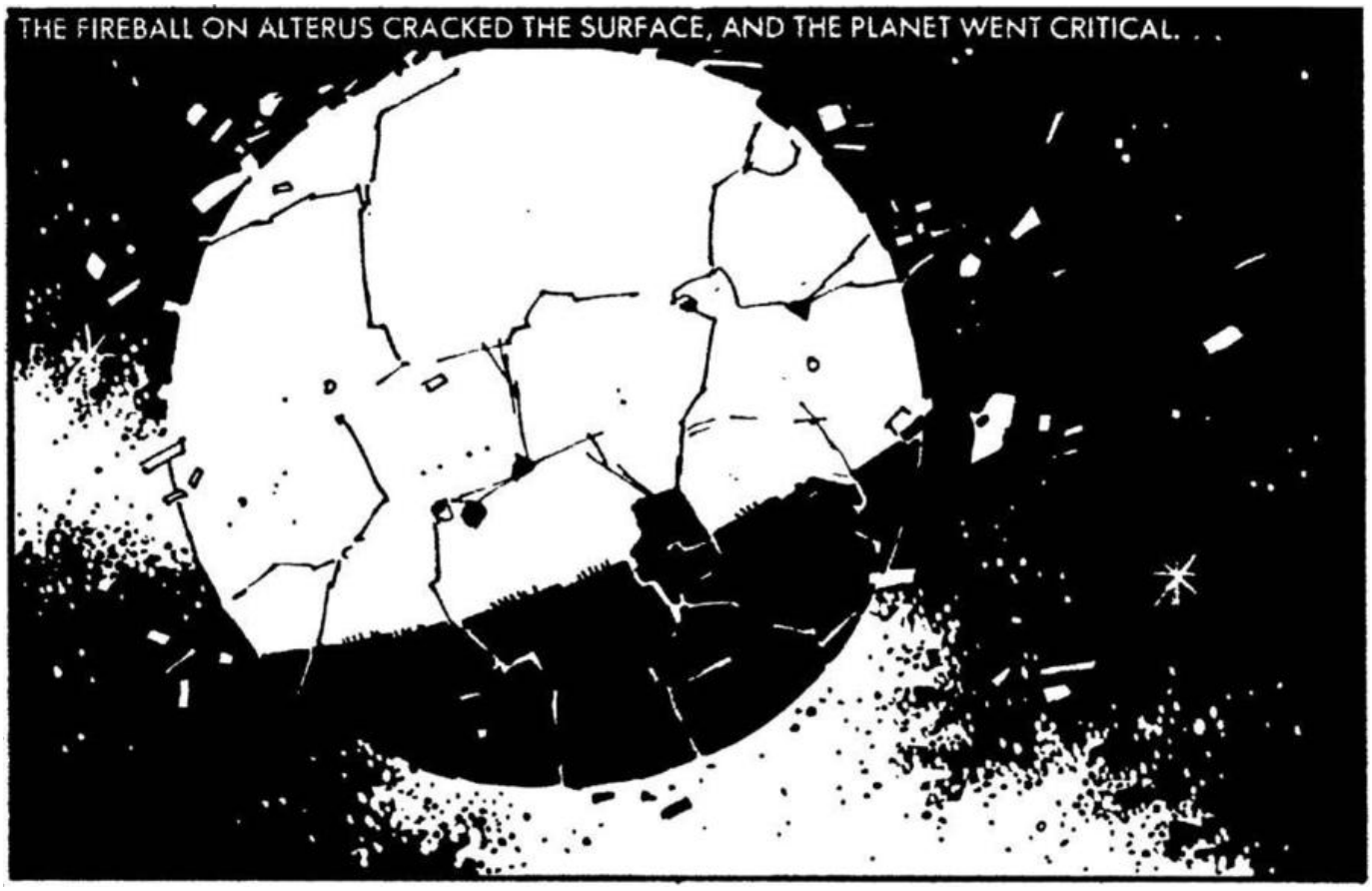
settlers had taken refuge in a complex of caves some distance from the city. This was the original landing site of the colonists and an old spacecraft was sited here. Whether this was an original colony ship is unknown, though this is unlikely as the vessels seems to have been primarily a one man vessel. It is more likely that the original site was used for some time as a ad hoc spaceport before the main settlement was set up. By the mannerisms of the remaining settlers, the invading Raba had displaced the Human settlers for some years. Much of the remainder of Oltair is covered in a mixture of hills and forests with no real extremes in the climates. Orbitting the planet is a large satellite which beams power to the robotic Raba.

Olympus (Issue 48-***King Robot***) The last planet where Professor Prospero was sited after being exiled for illegal robotics experimentation. He was killed there by his creations. Olympus is a lush world suitable for colonisation. There is one settlement, a large impressive city that was the base of the robots. Housing a large Starport and impressive defences it would be tough to take in an attack. The landscape around the city is largely forested with no sign of any serious infrastructure as the robots tend to stay in the city.

Omega-One (Issue 272-***Carter's Fury***). Omega-One, known informally as The Planet of the Dead, is basically a giant mortuary planted tended entirely by robots. Really the only reason to visit is for law enforcement operatives to check on a corpse that has been brought in. The temperature both inside and out is cold in order to preserve the corpses.

Oprel (Issue 132-***The Undead***). A human colony which is part of a chain of agricultural worlds, in this case, fish farming. A good part of Oprel's surface is covered with water. Despite its peaceful nature, a moderately sized garrison is maintained here.

Orios (Issue 144-***The Sailfighters of Sol 7***). Orios is a planet that was designated for conversion to a food production world by terraforming. The native terrain prior to terraforming was not overly hospitable being largely rocky. The planet housed an underground base with supplies of toxic chemicals that was meant to be introduced into the food supply. This was part of a plan to poison earth food supplies and was masterminded by the Tion Empire.



Pados-12 (Issue 57-***Galactic Lawman***). A tiny Earth-type planet. It's capital Pados City is a modern city with a good sized population. The planet was once taken over by escaped Tarian criminals. It typically has a UPO marshal assigned.

Pardia (Issue 107-***The Magnon Marauders***). A Magnon colony that is typically used for the storage of refined Heptonite crystals, it is largely desolate except for one city, a large self-automated city called Astor.

Pavo (Issue 100-***Pirates of the Ether Sea***). The planet Pavo, in the star system of Rigor is the homeworld of the Pavo people and lies close to the major spacelanes. It is under the rule of an absolute dictator known as the Usurper. He toppled the previous civilian government, and declared its head, Yubee Kroll a criminal and enemy of the State. Kroll was forced to flee the planet in an unarmed ship. Unknown to most people, the Usurper is also the Rigorian Plunderer, a notorious pirate. Pavo is ringed with orbital defences consisting of patrols of warships and orbital defence platforms, heavily armed with mounted guns as well as fighter craft. The main city is under the strict control of the Usurper, but some of Kroll's comrades remain in hiding within the city with a quick escape route to the wastelands where there are other resistance movements. The polar region of Pavo houses a penal colony where the usurpers political enemies are exiled to. There is no escape as the prison is surrounded by bleak marshland, nearby is a large marsh gas refinery. The main stronghold of the rebels houses the Avenger, a Starship the size of a small to medium cruiser. Near the Pavo planetary system is an asteroid where the Plunderer has a hidden base with spare armaments.

Pax Ultima (Issue 166-***The Clone Ranger***). An earth sized planet with a breathable atmosphere, it was an arctic world that was unsuitable for colonisation. Inhabited by a species called the Pax, large bipedal creatures, the planet was basically an iceball. A matter converter was used to make what was basically a rapid terraforming happen quickly. The Pax could adapt however. Earth settlers rapidly moved in, some with no regard to the already settled species. The settlements are rudimentary and although there is some technology, it is still pretty basic.

Paxos (Issue 198-***Time Warrior***). Paxos is a peaceful planet in the year 3040, with a pacifistic but highly advanced civilisation. At conflict with the alien Korvan, they reached an agreement to settle who woud win their war with a gladiatorial contest. The Paxos decided to pluck champions from Earths past. The Paxos civilisation is highly advanced but seems to be largely defenceless.

Pelion (Issue 167-***Mind Bender***). Home to Cybeset industries, this planet is largely a gas planet but the factories of Cybeset industries are suspended above the poisonous acidic atmosphere. It is not a healthy place to visit but ideal for concealing what a company might be doing.

Persephone (Issue 269-***HERO-The Ultimate Gameshow***). A small isolated colony of Earth (by this time called Terra Prime). located on the Galactic rim, the colony was sparsely populated and largely ignored until invaded by the Alien Zaard who established a beachhead there in their war against Earth. The large majority of the planets surface was covered in dense jungle which made it a dangerous area for fighting in. Rather than large troop movements, smaller platoon sized patrols were sent out intermittently supported by air cover. There only seems to have been a small number of settlements.

Petrula (Isse 23-***Slaveship of Simala***). The planet of Petrula was home to the Petrulan people. A civilised, but rather technologically backwards people. Founded under a monarchical society the Petrulans lived in peace maintaining only a small armed forces, mainly for ceremonial and basic defence purposes. The city was built round the royal palace and was built in an old fashioned style. The wilds of Petrula are largely craggy hill lands.

Phragnos (Issue 140-***Deathwheel***) When the Earth Federation was in conflict with the warlike Xerkonians, the Xerkonians brought to bear their newest weapon codenamed Deathwheel. The only mineral capable of counteracting Deathwheel's ion blade was Dwarf Silver, a mineral which was also extremely rare. At that time Phragnos was the closest planet to possess any. However Phragnos was also neutral. A team from the Space Assault Squad was sent to steal it. The planet itself was unremarkable. The capital was a medium sized city with modern buildings and infrastructure. Phragnos had been occupied by a small Xerkonian

force to deny the dwarf silver to the Earth Federation.

Pi Centauri (Issue 14-***Battlecruiser Revenge***). The inhabitants of this planet were descendants of colonists who tried to rebel against Earth when agitating for independence, but the uprising was crushed and the rebels exiled to Pi Centauri. By the time of the larger conflict the planet was usually referred to plainly as Centauri. Its capital city, Starport and main military base is the city of Centurious. There is an almost permanent fleet presence in orbit round Centauri itself keeping the planet safe from attack. The main Starport is ringed with defences and is extremely difficult to attack.

Polis III (Issue 148-***The Killing Game***). This planet is largely desolate and is a sand and dust blasted wasteland. However, it also houses a huge spaceport that is the home of Tungas, an infamous crimelord who also collaborates with the Krell Empire. The Spaceport is full of spacer bars where ship crews frequent. However, it can also be a dangerous place to ask suspicious questions.

Portan (Issue 129-***Chariots of Fear***). Portan is a planet that was accidentally discovered by an Earth vessel that passed through a Worm Hole. The planet itself is a virtual paradise for the most part with a clean atmosphere, jungle and forested areas and some swamps. There are three main 'factions'. The Valkis are the original inhabitants of the planet and despite looking primitive are treated as outcast by the apparently more civilised Icons and their Brakat servants. In truth the Icons are robots who overthrew the Valkis and attempted to kill them, eventually consigning them to the swamps. The Icons became more human looking. The Brakats are captured Valkis, fitted with a helmet that blocks independent thought process and more or less treating these captured souls as their own 'robots'. The main city of the Icons has an elegant Grecian look about it, clean and uncluttered. There is a central building that does not fit in with the theme of the rest of the city and this is the power source for the Icons. The settlement for the Valkis are crude ad-hoc buildings in the swamplands with little comfort. Probably because a permanent settlement is impractical.

Praxis (Issue 14-***Battlecruiser Revenge***). Praxis is an influential planet which remained neutral in the war between the forces of the Earth Union and the Centauri Republic. Senators from Praxis were intended to meet the Earth Union and decide if they were joining the side of Earth. However, the representatives were kidnapped by the Centauri.

Prota (Issue 11-***The Purple Planet***). An unusual and largely unknown planet. At one time thought to be home to the Prota. The Prota themselves are in fact beings of energy who can alter their forms at will including into Starships, plant life and other diverse forms. The large part of the planet itself if not all of it is made up of the Prota themselves. A distinguishing characteristic of the planetary surface is the colour of all the vegetation is purple. As a result of its unique status there are no cities or any other form of 'manmade' settlements on the planet surface.

Prox (Issue 123-***The Planet Eater***). The planet of Prox is situated on the other side of a vortex. Prox itself is an advanced world with technology superior to that of Earth, however, Prox has a shortage of metals which does hamper them somewhat. The Prox people have a ruling council with emphasis on the military who try to salvage all they can. The emphasis on the military creates discontent with some ordinary Prox people. The Prox government cannot really be classed as evil, more as uncaring.

R-Iz-Ona (Issue 204-***The Robot Kid***). A frontier world with a distinctly 'old west' atmosphere. The settlement of Carmel here is the constant target of bandits, however money is not the target but the rare ore Vitallium. The main settlement, Dittrich City, houses R-Iz-Ona's sole spaceport and also an office of Kelso Robotics who sell various robots including combat capable models. The settlement of Carmel is linked to Dittrich City by a railroad.

Rama 3 (Issue 7-***Holocaust Hogan***). A small scientific colony housing some of Earths more important scientists. The colony was raided and plundered by Vassals forces.

Rega. (Issue 159-***Battleworld***) The homeworld of the Regan people, situated in the Rega Nueva star system. This planet was destroyed by the brutal Arcon.

Reptol (Issue 107-***The Magnon Marauders***) Reptol is a Magnon colony in the Elkan sector of Magnon space. It is an inhospitable world whose sole virtue is that it is the sole source of the valuable Heptonite crystals. The surface is rocky and the

temperature is of a blazing heat. The wild lands are inhabited by dangerous carnivores. However, there is a moderate Magnon garrison on the world to protect the Heptonite crystals.

Rictus (Issue 107-***The Magnon Marauders***). Rictus was an Earth colony situated on a dead planet which had an irregular orbit.. This orbit caused it to stray into Magnon space in 2236. The base was attacked by the Dreyguard fleet and the planet destroyed.

Rigel (Issue 115-***Liberty Goddess***). Rigel is the home and tactical command centre of the alien Shapeshifters, a race of beings who could change shape at will, though their shape had to stay within pretty much the size of their natural forms. Rigel itself has a breathable oxygen/nitrogen/carbon dioxide atmosphere, but it is heavily defended and does not welcome visitors due to its strategic importance to the Shapeshifters.

Roanak (Issue 73-***Fear on the Spacelanes***). A category A listed planet with an earth type atmosphere. Due to its primitive native life there are severe penalties for interference in their culture, this includes unauthorised landing on the planet by advanced civilisations.

ACER LOCKED INTO ORBIT HIGH ABOVE THE PLANET.

Samor (Issue 34-***The Seas of Samor***). Samor is the homeworld of the conquest driven Samorians who invaded and conquered Earth during the late 22nd century. The Samorian planet is mostly water covered, though the Samorians are highly advanced and have a network of cities and military installations dotted throughout the planet. Defences are quite comprehensive consisting of gun posts, fighter squadrons and undersea combat craft. There Is no Xenobium, the valuable Starship fuel on Samor, though it is refined there and it is this mineral which is the basis of the Samorians power.

Sansibarr and Kilindini (Issue 128-***The Grave of Mankind***). These are rather backwards planets technologically. Both planets are ruled by a tyrannical emperor who commands a lethal defence system. Both planets make use of slave labour and the guards are brutal overseers. Of the two worlds, Sansibarr is the capital.

Sarana (Issue 8-***Planet of Fear***). Sarana is a desolate world 1000 light years from Earth. There is little to recommend it except for the presence of pockets of valuable minerals which have attracted various small outfits of hard-bitten miners. The planet was thought to have absolutely no water though there are tiny pockets in the mountains, these are not picked up by planetary sensor scans, therefore water has to be shipped in. There is one native form of life, again not detected by sensor scans. A large 'buglike' creature which is a crystalline life form. These single-minded lifeforms will chase down anything with iron in it, including human bodies once detected. The plains are of dry desert sand and rock which can make survival difficult.

Sartog (Issue 228-***The Secret of Ice Mountain***). The planet Sartog was chosen as an area to dumped

banned, but indestructible weapons. This was done in a heavily guarded structure, and the fact that the planet is of arctic conditions made it perfect. The main building is surrounded by savage mutants. The terrain is extremely difficult with no suitable places for ground vehicles.

Scarga (Issue 151-***Extinction Earth***). The home planet of the Scargan race. The Scargans were responsible for the creation of the bio-mass that made possible the construction of Minder, the immense planet sized artificial intelligence. Scarga is a heavily militaristic society ruled over by a corrupt Supreme council. Their main Starport is in orbit, a large space station, from which passengers can them disembark by gravity lift to the surface. This gives the rather wary Scargans an easy way to track who is coming in and out. Even then the main Starports receiving station is some distance away from the huge capital city. The capital is awash with ultra modern skyscrapers, but crime is still a problem. One of the main Scargan crime lords goes by the name of Zandor.

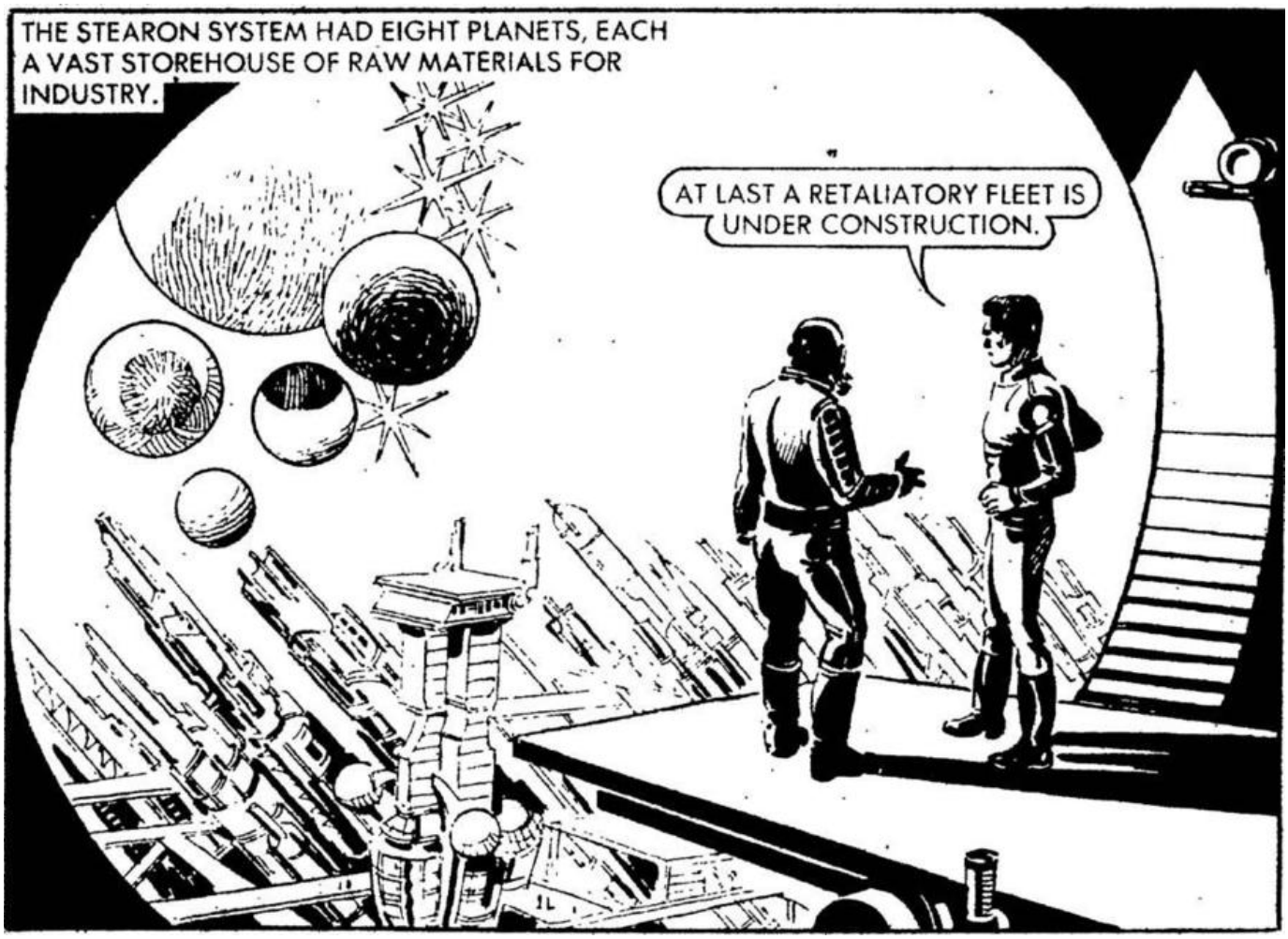
Seleous Prime (Issue 262-***Cobra***). A planet located on the fringe of space on the periphery of the main trade routes. Shadsar is the main city with a population of millions who were mostly human. Shadsar is a city that has a high crime rate which is strictly controlled by government agencies, mainly the highly trained Cobra agents. Not the most pleasant place to live. There is also an area called Junk City, one which the authorities prefer to ignore, and which serves as a hiding place for many criminals and those who do not wish to be monitored by the authorities. The planet frequently suffers from torrential rain storms and space is at a premium with a huge poverty gap. People are forced to live in slum-like conditions if they are not well off, and every movement is tracked through various means like energised electronic cash cards making it easy for government agents to track individual movement.

Silicon IV. (Issue 50-***Moonsplitter***). A sand-blasted desert world that was the main frontline between the forces of Galac-Squad and the warlike Mease. Silicon IV had been turned into a fortress world by the Mease as it was the last thing that stood between Galac Squad and a successful invasion of the Mease homeworld. The planetary conditions were extremely hostile, punctuated by dust storms which combined with numerous Mease booby traps and patrols made Galac-Squad activities difficult. The planet was eventually pulverised and the base destroyed when Hadron Halley tested a 'moonsplitter' weapon on one of Silicon IV's inner moons.

Sinister (Issue 19-***Sinister City***). The planet of Sinister is the homeworld of the Sinister people, an imperialistic alien race who outwardly resemble humans. The planet is ruled over, in name at least, by an Emperor, a mysterious figure who wears an ornate helmet with an opaque visor. Although in theory the Emperor is in charge, his son is the one who is in command of the military. The Sinisters invaded and conquered Earth, obviously this was in Earth's early exploration period as the presence of deep space Starships on both sides was relatively rare at this time. Due to the rocky inhospitable terrain of the planet Sinister, the cities are towering structures as there is not the space to have wide sprawling cities. Sinister's main city is protected by a lethal network of orbital beam projectors which are capable of devastating an attacking fleet.

Sirius (Issue 81-***The Serpents of Sirius***). A desolate world in the Cauda system that was uncharted by Galac-Squad. It was the subject of an operation to install a warp gate base in the system to combat the Aquillans. The planet does not have an atmosphere that humans can breathe and pressurised settlements need to be set up. The only native life is the huge serpents whose bite can suck the flesh off a creature.

Soma (Issue 16-***The Secret of Soma***). The home planet of the warlike Soma. The planet of Soma has an atmosphere breathable by human life. The landscape of the planet alternates between large expanses of flat plains and ranges of hills and mountains. The Soma cities are distinctive, made up of bubble like structures linked by covered tubes that serve as transportation areas. The capital city is called Amos. There are also considerable underground areas including one such area that houses a transmitter and receiver. This communicates with the 'Brain', the central computer that also governs the militaristic Soma government. The Brain itself is housed in one of Somas moons buried underneath the surface. The Soma Government itself is run by the military which was making demands


THE STEARON SYSTEM HAD EIGHT PLANETS, EACH A VAST STOREHOUSE OF RAW MATERIALS FOR INDUSTRY.
AT LAST A RETALIATORY FLEET IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

on Earth and conducting a series of unprovoked raids on Earth traffic. However, the military government had staged a military coup against the civil government which fled to the hills to conduct a guerrilla war against the military.

Sorion (Issue 22-***The Pirates of Vega III).*** Sorion is the home planet of the warlike Sorion race. A race of humanoids (their faces are never actually shown in the issue). The main head of government is the sorion Warlord. They have ambitions to take Earth territory. The main Sorion city is also home to the primary spaceport and the Sorion military command centre which is centred round a communications centre. This centre is the weakness in their military command structure. Knocking out the communications dome effectively paralyses their military causing chaos. The majority of Sorian industry is on a war footing due to its territorial ambitions.

Spiros IV (Issue 53-***Samurai Warrior***). A small to medium sized farming planet attacked by a Marauder Starship. Otherwise it is unremarkable with no distinguishing characteristics.

Stanaz (Issue 113-***The Stonemen***). A planet some distance from Earth's territory. The planet Stanaz is home to a race known informally as the Stonemen, so named for their ability to transform into solid stone when threatened by weapons. The planet Stanaz is extremely short on natural metal resources.

Stentor II (Issue 20-***The Doomsday Machines***). Not much is known about Stentor II, except that they were in a war with their neighbouring planet, Stentor III. Stentor III lost the war, but due to the use of nuclear weapons, Stentor II's population all died of radiation sickness and related illnesses. However, before that happened they set up automated war machines on their planets moon that made sure Stentor III stayed beaten. These

war machines were activated by machinery used by Earth colonists hundreds of years later. The planet is still a radioactive cinder lethal to human life and has nothing to recommend visiting it.

Stentor III (Issue 20-***The Doomsday Machines***). Stentor III is a paradise planet that was ripe for settlement for settlers from an overcrowded Earth. There are numerous small settlements and farming stations as well as a number of what could be termed cottage industries. Most of the planet is forested or jungle, with a plentiful clean water supply, unpolluted air and a rudimentary but decent condition road network. There is one primary Starport. There are some hilly areas and swampland, but most of the planet is ideal. Stentor III once in the distant past had a native alien species that left records in hieroglyphics that are in fact a mathematical language. The planets race was once in a war with its neighbour, Stentor II. Stentor III lost the war after exhausting its resources. However, the planet was left in a good condition.

Suprona (Issue 194-***Cabel and the She Warrior***). This planet is distinctly unremarkable except for the presence of Zwarks. These medium sized animals somewhat resembling a large Earth hare are the fastest, and rarest, creatures in the galaxy. Therefore, this planet attracts a large number of what are termed as pet-runners. These smugglers specialise in smuggling rare and endangered species to order. The planet is home to a security detachment which includes starfighters to prevent this from happening.

SX-9 (Issue 33-***The Lost Planet***). While Edena and Keeron were being established as prime colony sites, SX-9 was established as a penal colony. It was the recipient of one of the few Territe generators and this also met SX-9's needs. Centuries passed and SX-9 became a warlike planet under the rule of a warlord and war machines became the prime industry. SX-9 maintained a potent war fleet and a huge army.

Sygma 334 (Issue 235-***Time Slip***). This planet was used by Earth authorities to dump a violent criminal called "Doc" Martin on. The planet was already inhabited by two main races already. One is referred to only as the 'Primitives' and they are quite distinctive looking with high foreheads. The Groths are more similar to humans and look broadly similar to early barbarians like the Huns or Goths. The planet is primarily jungle and forested with no large settlements. The temperature seems to be perfectly tolerable with good prospects for future colonisation.

Tannadize 4 (Issue 221-***Beastworld***). Tannadize 4 is an open Penal colony where the prisoners are left unsupervised and basically left to their own devices. However, the penal colony is watched from an orbital police post on one of the worlds three moons. The colony is also known by the informal names of "Endoff", short for "End of the Line". The prison population itself is two tiered, with the settlement seemingly run by a mayor. However, beneath this there is a second, darker side to this colony with the more hardcore criminals being organized into committing more serious crimes including the possibility of leaving the colony. This involved a crooked cop called Sergeant Slatz and the use of an old Police patroller which had the passcodes which could bypass the colonies automated defences.

Tanno (Issue 44-***The Caverns of Oblivion***). The planet Tanno was an otherwise unremarkable world which had the misfortune to lie in the front lines between the battling forces of Earth and the Krogg. The planet itself was largely temperate, with a mixture of plains and swamps. The inhabitants were a mix of tribes of varying levels of technology. One such tribe worshipped a 'monolith' in the middle of a giant lake. This monolith was a part sunken Starship from the Antanagusta, a race that had fought Earth 1000 years before. The sole remaining crew member was in cryo-stasis. Other tribes protected the stardrive crystal of the vessel and had established a city consisting of an Aztec style pyramid as its central temple.

Tasma (Issue 154-***The Suicide Squad***). Tasma is the home of the Tasma race. It is an extremely hostile planet dotted with elevated airtubes between the major cities. This is due to the hostile nature of the surface, whether it is large expanses of carnivorous forests, ponds of radioactive ores or run down slum-like work camps. Tasma City, the capital is highly advanced and well defended but it is not the main Starport, perhaps in an attempt to isolate it from potential invaders.

Tassin (Issue 137-***Guardian of the Vortex***). A mid technology world ruled by a petty power-mad

tyrant called Manik. Tassin's defences are augmented by automated defences on it's moon. Tassin seems to be a modern enough planet but the ordinary citizens are kept in a state of perpetual fear under their repressive ruler. The city is controlled through the curfew which is augmented with an automatic fog which causes people to lose all sense of direction until they are arrested (or indeed killed(by robotic enforcers). Despite this, there is a rebel movement using an improvised underground city outside the capital.

Taurus 3 (Issue 5-***The Shipeater***). The planet of Taurus 3 is a privately owned world used for research and development by the Universal Waste Development Corporation. Under the administration of a Controller it is outside starfleet jurisdiction. Protected by armed guards the planet seems to have a thin, but partially breathable atmosphere but it is not exactly welcoming and the research complex is the only thing of note.

Tegal Major Five (Issue 208-***Planet of the Dead***). A Terran colony on the fringes of space. The colony had modern infrastructure and one major city and Starport. The surrounding countryside seems to be prime farming land. Unfortunately the colony fell prey to Baal, last of a vampiric species. The entire colony was wiped out.

The Purple World (Issue 2-***The Domes of Death***). The Purple World is one of the few inhabited planets left in the universe at the time of the story. At this time most inhabited planets had been laid waste by long standing and widespread galactic war. Humans by this time had largely abandoned planetary surfaces for the comforts of artificial worlds. Most natural worlds by this time were of a hostile nature. The Purple World is so called due to the colour of its surface as viewed from space. The main inhabitants of the planet were a race of humanoid insectoid type creatures with a distinctly primitive technology comparable to approximately 17th-18th Century Earth with widespread use of muskets, basic rifles, and cannon. The primary settlement for this race was a fortress like citadel that had been taken over by a race of reptilian creatures.

Thera (Issue 79-***Ring of Terror***). Home planet of the Theran species, a race of slender reptilian humanoids. Thera is a highly advanced planet with a lethal defence system comprised of missile batteries and fighter squadrons. Thera itself was first encountered by Earthmen during the dawn of space travel when an accident on a deep space lab accidentally triggered an explosion causing a crude FTL drive. It is unknown just how much distance there is from Earth to Thera or whether in Earth's future contact is re-established.

Thrymheim (Issue 127-***Death Reaper***). The planet of Thrymheim is a technologically primitive world that is largely snow covered. The main Starport is known as Thrymheim Starport, and is the main place to meet people especially if you need transportation elsewhere on the planet as the temperatures forbid the use of sub-atmosphere craft. Instead more primitive sleds are the normal way of travelling. There was a research city known as Valhalla Nova on the equator, but it was abandoned after the director, Bryan Traven performed illegal experiments.

Thule (Issue 15-***Algol the Terrible***). The last outpost of the galaxy, this planet although it has a breathable atmosphere and is perfectly habitable is rarely visited, perhaps because of its isolation from the main trading routes, and therefore vulnerability to both pirate and starbaron attack. It houses a large computer complex which was built by Herne the Outlaws grandfather. The whole purpose of the complex was to agitate a stellar gas cloud when it entered the orbit of Abraxis.

Thule (2) (Issue 72-***Massacre on Thule***). The planet of Thule was the frontline during the conflict between Earth and the alien Fareet. As either side possessed craft able to directly reach the others homeworlds from their own home planet, Thule was vital to both sides as it could be used as a stepping-stone. The planet has a temperate climate and Earth maintained a large garrison and spaceport on the surface. In orbit they used the cyclotron beam projector, an FTL beam from Earth that enabled rapid transfer of supplies.

Tin City (Issue 78-***Doorway to Death***). Not a planet as such, but a large sprawling artificial world that is constructed from the shell of an abandoned spaceship. Tin City is run by the autocratic Tarrent, a competent administrator who is not exactly overly choosy about who he does business with. Tin City is a mass of walkways and passages which makes it an ideal place for fugitives to hide. Tin City also has its own police force.

Titon (Issue 35-***Lord of Jarkness***) The homeworld of the savage Titon aliens. The Titon attacked the Earth colonies of Jarkness and Andreasta and put both under a brutal occupation. An invasion of Inos was in preparation. Titon is ringed with orbital defence posts and early warning stations that are meant to make an attack far more difficult. Titon cities are immense and are largely geared towards war production.

Toth (Issue 40-***Planet Tamer***). A distant but habitable planet where Marshall Jubal McKay, later to become the Planet Tamer, chased down the criminal Trent. There are some small settlements there and the planet appears habitable if not a little isolated. There are no organised spaceports or any other high technology facilities.

Tresca (Issue 41-***Assault on Destra***) Tresca is a highly advanced neighbour of Destra with considerable military forces and lethal planetary defences. They maintain a large standing army and are well trained and motivated. The planet is a hub of trade and there seems to be little crime.

Triton II. (Issue 54-***The Torturer of Triton II***). The homeworld of the hostile Triton species, this race has been in a varying state of hostilities with Galac Squad. The Triton home world itself is a sparse planet with a number of cities built in the exotic Tritonian style. There seems to be little in the way of vegetation. Triton II does not welcome outside visitors and therefore there is little cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Troy (Issue 86-***The Cosmic Outlaw***). Troy is a hospitable Earth type planet and is the administrative centre of the Alliance of Worlds housing many important meetings of the Alliance of Worlds and being an ideal meeting place. It houses a large, modern spaceport capable of housing a large number of spacecraft at one time. There is a modern infrastructure and a high standard of living in the planet with few signs of pollution or crime.

Tryax (Issue 73-***Fear on the Spacelanes***). A long standing Earth colony, Tryax has maintained a strong trading fleet for over a thousand years. Tryax also houses advanced space traffic control facilities and solar beaming stations to keep the fleets of Star clippers in prime condition.

Tyr (Issue 177-***The Midas Mystery***). The main planetary base of the armaments empire headed up by Sharna Lyall. A large part of the planet is home to a testing area where the latest weapons are tested and demonstrated to prospective clients.

Tyr (2) (Issue 117-***The Terror Towers of Tyr***). The planet Tyr is a human settlement and is most notable for its floating cities constructed primarily out of Astrium, an immensely strong metal with anti-gravity properties. The cities are heavily armed

making them tough to attack from the air, but unfortunately the projectors on the ground that help keep the cities airborne are also the cities Achilles Heel.

V8-Nam (Issue 273-***The Robot Kit Strikes Back***). V8-Nam, obviously given a name by someone with a warped sense of humour is a medium sized jungle planet. Also known by the unofficial monicker of "Rocky's World". This planet was the site of a mass evacuation of Commonwealth civilians due to attacks by groups of Nationalists and an organisation called FIST. There are only a few settlements left by this time and they are all commandeered by the military. The whole planet has a frontier look about it with no industry to speak of, and little to attract visitors.

Vanderdecken (Issue 64-***The Exterminator***). A vast, ancient city-planet. This mysterious world is millions of years old yes is in perfect condition. Everything is in an operable condition. It is a massive war machine, but when discovered is without a power source capable of powering it.

Vardy (Issue 87-***Invaders from the Black Star***). Vardy is a planet on the other side of a worm hole from Earth's sphere of influence. On the surface it appears to be an inhospitable arctic world with nothing to recommend it. However, the people of Vardy have settlements in deep ravines beneath the mist level where the temperatures and general climate are more pleasant. Vardy technology is about equal to earth and they are fierce warriors. Due to the danger from the Attilan hordes they do keep themselves to themselves and therefore there is little attraction for visitors, if they could even find the cities.

Vegas Prime (Issue 208-***Planet of the Dead***). An Earth type planet whose entire surface was covered in all manner of vice dens. Vegas Prime is home to various criminals both petty and more serious. Much of the planets poor sector is run down and law enforcement is thin on the ground. Murder seems to be commonplace.

Velan (Issue 91-***The Acid Seas of Koga***). A Terran colony and fuel depot. It is the only source of fuel for Earth during the time of the wars with the Koga. Raided by Kogan commandos.

Vesta (Issue 38-***The Seeds of Doom***). A private planet owned by the Rancorp Corporation, a large galactic agricultural concern. Despite the size of the food production facilities on the planet, which is almost entirely geared towards constant production throughout the surface, there are barely two hundred humans, the vast majority of the process being robotic. The surface is also laced with robotic trains, some up to ten miles long that ferry the product to the processing centre. The processing centre is the largest single built up area on the planet, dominated by its star lift that ferries food into orbit five hundred miles above the surface to be transferred into freighters.

Veta (Issue 5-***The Shipeater***). A planet a short distance away from Taurus 3, the vast majority of the planet is covered in dense jungle. There are native inhabitants but they are at a primitive stage of development. The planet seems to have been used by Universal Waste Development at one time in the development of the Drawn, a creature that was meant to dispose of nuclear waste. Whether the corporation maintains a permanent facility here is unknown though.

Vetar III (Issue 102-***The Siege of Seabed City***). A planet with a largely nitrogen atmosphere, inhabited by a small settlement belonging to an independent Terraforming company. Facilities are sparse and basic, as is usual with frontier life. The planet was attack by the alien Klagoth and the settlement devastated.

Vigo III (Issue 262-***Cobra***). At first glance a barren, desert world, the planet is barely habitable by human life. The planet suffers from extremes of climate change. At one moment it is a barren planet with little prospect of life, in the other, there are torrents of rain that brings dormant plant life back to life and formerly dusty rivers back into full flow. There are also indications of small scattered settlements though there are few if any permanent structures, instead the other inhabitants being of a more nomadic persuasion.

Vonoi (Issue 153-***The Star Destroyers***). Vonoi is a planet with vegetation. A million years prior, the planet of Vonoi was blasted clean of life when its sun went supernova, but the inhabitants, the Vonans had foreseen the disaster and dug deep caves in the bowels of the Earth, built a computer, the Magister which eventually ruled the Vonan' lives. Eventually, the Vonans emerged on the surface, finding no plant life, the great seas and forests of the planet had been scoured clean, and

even worse, the surface was a radioactive hell. The Magister raised an impressive building, the Halls of Power, also called Cloudsplicer, provided synthetic food and the Vonan's distinctive masks which would monitor their condition and keep them alive. However, the race was sterile and incapable of breeding though the masks would give them near immortality. The Vonans grew to be jealous of Earth's position in the galaxy. Vonoi is a distant planet that is not at all welcoming to visitors. It is unknown if there are still trace amount of radioactivity after a million years and the only structure is Cloudsplicer itself.

Wengel-Four (Issue 186-***Starhawk***). The site of Magalos Minings operation in the Wengel system. Thought to be abandoned -- however, it did house a Trikalalak-K mine. Dealing in this mineral is illegal, and the mine was concealed.

X44B (Issue 74-***Killer Clones***). This planet although not particularly hospitable was the frontline in the war between the Earth Empire and Morgos. The planet had little to recommend it for setting up a permanent presence except for it being rich in various minerals that are ideal for Starship fuel. At this point both powers fleets were orbiting the planet, each unable to move due to a fuel shortage and any attempts to ferry fuel up was shot down. Each army had around three hundred men with their respective HQ's dug into high mountainsides, guarded heavily. Between each area it was a no mans land patrolled by hunter seeker mines and other lethal devices. Little or no vegetation grows on X44B.

Weaponworld (Issue 45-***Operation Overkill***). Weaponworld is the name of the desolate planet where the galaxy's weapons of mass destruction were stored. There are comprehensive defence systems including an extremely strong force field.

The Wheel (Issue 28-***Last Man on Earth***) On the fifth planet of the Alpha Centauri system was the planet-city known as The Wheel. Settled by colonists from an overcrowded and dying Earth. Considering there was no alien contact at this time, there was a considerable military, most of which was ground based. The Wheel was ruled by a computer -- a vast artificial intelligence who had the power of life or death over the populace. Through the secret police it maintained an iron grip on the population. The computer was ultimately destroyed however in a colonist uprising.

Wolfholt (Issue 45-***Operation Overkill***). Wolfholt is a lawless world where the only real law is the blaster that someone carries at their side. It is not uncommon for gunfights to break out on the street and this is largely routine. The Starport is comprehensive and all entries are logged into a visual ID database system.

Youna (Issue 25-***Galactic Shootout***). An uninhabited planet with a breathable atmosphere. The planet has nothing to distinguish it apart from a refuelling depot.

Zardon (Issue 96-***The Promised Planet***). Zardon is the last outpost of the Terran Federation, beyond which lies the badlands, an area disputed with the warlike predatory Kraal Empire. Despite it's frontier status, it has impressive infrastructure including regular robot freighter deliveries to the Capital City which is also the main spaceport on the planet. Perhaps because of its frontier status Zardon has an orbital defence station orbiting it.

Zariba (Issue 101-***Forgotten World***). Zariba is the main base of the Combine, a group of displaced soldiers, mercenaries and criminals who banded together after the Thermal Wars. Zariba is an isolated planet but due to its importance to the Combine it is heavily fortified. There is a very large central Starport ringed by formidable defences. Add to that that daytimes in the hinterlands are not hospitable with large tracts of Zaribas plains dotted with blocks of silicon which combined with the blazing sun can cause severe burns. There are also swamps of acid.

Zaros (Issue 95-***The Gate to Yesterday***). Zaros is a deserted planet that was once inhabited. The planets sun had become unstable causing regular bursts of lethal radiation to wash over the planet killing all forms of life. The Zarons had built a time gate to transport their race to another planet and although the gate remained intact and operational, by the time it was used it was too late for the Zaron race who mutated horribly.

Zeta-9 (Issue 7-***Holocaust Hogan***). Zeta 9 is the main penal colony in use by the Earth forces and is home to a large number of hardened criminals as well as a detachment of guardships, capital ships of considerable strength.

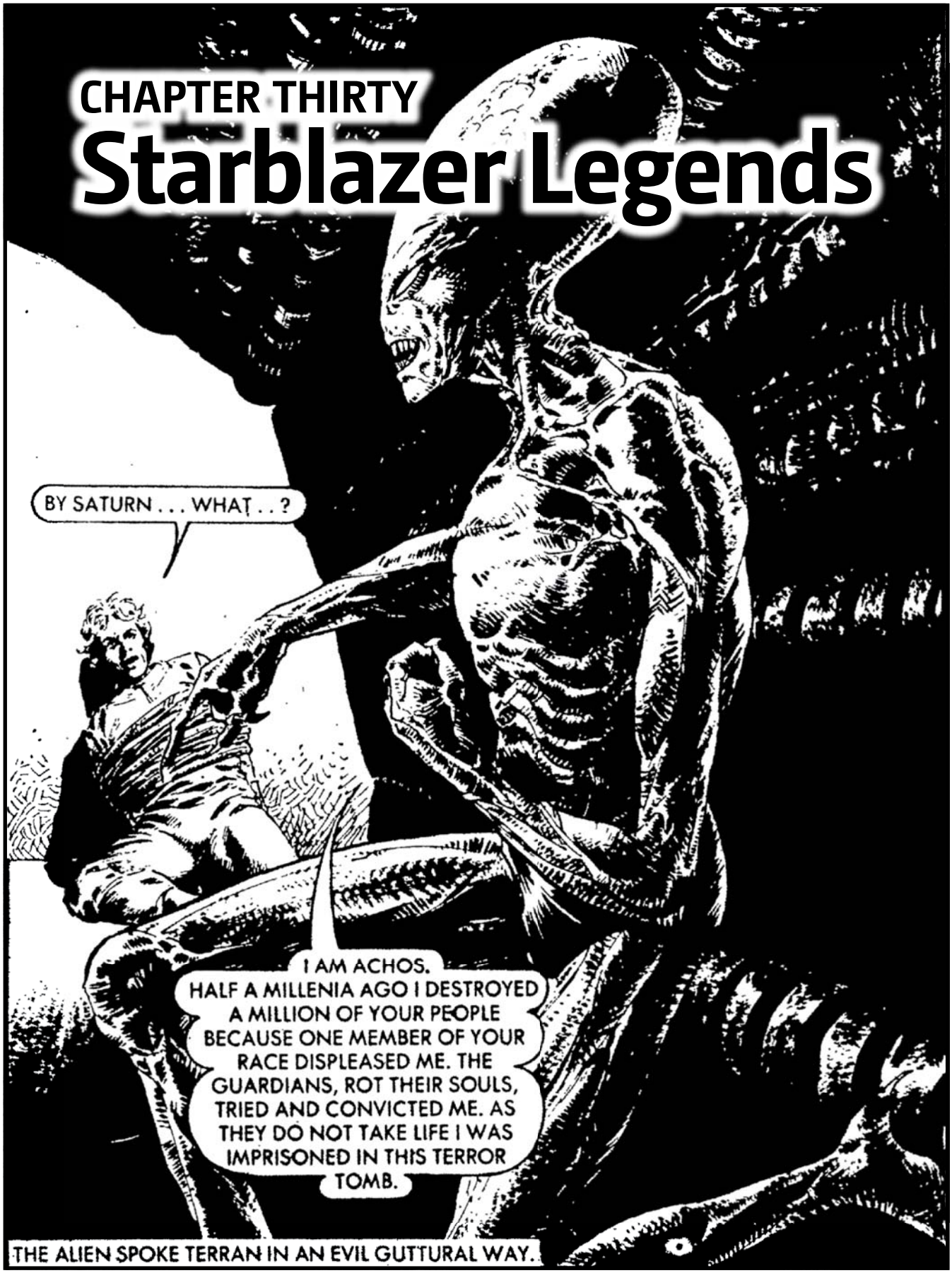
Zoantek. (Issue 40-***The Planet Tamer***). Homeworld of the Zoantek people, a technologically advanced but

nomadic people that resemble humans. They have a tribal culture. The main centre of government, such as it is, is on a village on top of a plateau making it a tough target. The planet itself has a breathable atmosphere and a good variety of plant life making it ideal for settlement. Due to the nomadic nature of the Zoanteks there are no large industrial plants.

Zoor (Issue 212-***Rogue Cop***) A Terran colony that is rife with crime. The planet is highly advanced and despite the best efforts of the local police, the crime rate will not drop. This is due to the presence of one Hengis Furgaar, the local crime lord. He has his own sub-atmospheric satellite base from where he monitors all official channels. The planet is rich in Stroncilite, a valuable mineral which forms the basis for much of the planetary economy.

Zorg (Issue 3-***Alien Attack***). The planet Zorg was home to the species of the same name. The Zorgs themselves were a peaceful race of humanoids who resembled primates. The planet though consisting largely of jungle was dotted with small settlements. Some of which were villages that mined the mineral Thircon for Starship fuel. The planet is now largely deserted as most of the Zorg have been enslaved by the Rel and are present on the Rel Time Transporter. Climate is pleasant and the air is perfectly breathable.

Zorr (Issue 51-***Prisoners of Zorr***). The planet Zorr is ruled by the dictator of the same name. The planet has one primary city and is heavily defended and fortified. The Starport that is present is geared towards military purposes as the planet Zorr does not encourage visitors. This would be unlikely anyway as Zorrian recruiters forcibly kidnap people they feel have leadership potential for the warfleet they are building. Outside the city it is extremely dangerous between the dangers of hostile primitive tribes, carnivorous Bejawys (dinosaur like creatures), poisonous gas swamplands and various other dangers.


CHAPTER THIRTY
Starblazer Legends
BY SATURN . . . WHAT . . ?
I AM ACHOS. HALF A MILLENIA AGO I DESTROYED A MILLION OF YOUR PEOPLE BECAUSE ONE MEMBER OF YOUR RACE DISPLEASED ME. THE GUARDIANS, ROT THEIR SOULS, TRIED AND CONVICTED ME. AS THEY DO NOT TAKE LIFE I WAS IMPRISONED IN THIS TERROR TOMB.
THE ALIEN SPOKE TERRAN IN AN EVIL GUTTURAL WAY.

Starblazer Legends

Here's a selection of unusual Starblazer Legends – summaries of stories from classic ***Starblazer*** issues as plot ideas for your campaign. We'll be adding to these on the website and in future supplements.

ASTRAL ARMADA

A Dangerous Peace

Even the fiercest war must have its end, but it is not always clear when that end has come. Such is the case with the 4th Thermal War waged between the Galactic Federation and the Odelot.

The origins of the Thermal War are clear enough. For many years the Odelot, a humanoid alien race of feline appearance, had demanded payment from any vessel passing through their sector of space. Because the Odelot occupied a key shipping route, and because their military was powerful, other races grudgingly paid their taxes, until the greedy Odelotian rulers upped the charges significantly. Earth, along with a number of other races in the Galactic Republic, refused to pay the new taxes. Incensed the Odelotians responded by taking the payment by force, attacking and looking any republican vessels they could lay their hands on. When the Republic retaliated, the war had begun.

With both sides evenly matched, neither strong enough to win nor weak enough to loose, the war dragged on for years, till both sides were over-stretched, exhausted, and all but bankrupt. Eventually both sides sued for peace, and signed the treaty of Verz Alles. This should have marked the end of the war for good, but it has proven to be an uneasy peace, with members of each side still eager to restart the conflict and end the war ... their way. The disarmament process continues, but both sides have their hidden weapons, disgruntled soldiers, and unhappy civilians, all waiting for an excuse to go to war again.

The opportunities for adventure, and for treachery, should be clear.

Post-War Earth

The treaty of Verz Alles placed serious arms limitations upon both sides in the aftermath of the 4th Thermal War. As a result Earth has been forced to reduce it's once great battle fleet to a small defensive force. Limits on the size and armament of warships has led to most of Earth's battleships being left to rust at the planetary cluster of Arboc, the site of the last great battle between the Federation and Odelot. Earth's military space force now consists mainly of a small fleet of defensive cruisers only just equal in power to one of the war era battleships. Supplementing this official force are a number of wartime vessels which were hidden from the Odelotian treaty inspectors, or which have been converted into merchant ships with hidden weapons systems. Chief of these is the so-called 'Base Ship', formerly an assault carrier, which the Security arm of the Earth Defence force now uses as a support ship for it's spy missions.

Earth supplements this space force with covert strike forces of ex-military special operatives whose mission is to spy on the Odelot, and if possible to take action against them. Officially deniable, these forces are denounced as pirates if caught. Despite these secret elements the Earth administration is actually very keen on peace, even if many humans retain their hatred of the Odelot and would happily see the war restarted.

Post-War Odelot

The treaty of Verz Alles forced the Odelotians to accept restrictions similar to those imposed on Earth. Although they have retained significant ground troops, armed with traditional straight swords, halberds, and blaster rifles, their space fleet has been cut down to a handful of defensive vessels no more powerful than the cruisers now defending the Solar System. The Odelotian capital vessels have been destroyed, and their network of listening posts has been shut down.

Or at least that is the official story.

The human dissenters are far from alone in wanting the war to restart. The new ruler of the Odelot, Lord Pangrev, still smarts at his people's defeat, and yearns to crush the humans once and for all. Although Pangrev is ostensibly leading his people's participation in the ongoing disarmament process he is in fact using the opportunity to spy out Earth's weaknesses in preparation for a fresh attack.

The Odelotians have in fact managed to retain a far more significant space force than Earth suspects, or the treaties permit. An entire fleet of damaged warships have been rescued from battlefields like Arboc and spirited back to Odelot for refitting in secret. Concealed within the superstructure of an orbiting holiday resort this new armada is being prepared for an all-out attack on a weakened Earth.

All that remains is for Earth to destroy the last of it's mothballed offensive fleet, and the way will be open.

In the meantime Pangrev's intelligence agents have been making sure that no word of their treachery gets back to Earth by taking some human weapons inspectors prisoner and tampering with the reports of other agents using a still intact communications station hidden amongst the wreckage of Arboc.

The Astral Armada

In ***Starblazer*** no. 139, ***Astral Armada***, a Terran strike force led by Garrie Coles manages to uncover Pangrev's plan. In a deadly game of cat and mouse across the galaxy the strike team manages to rescue the Earth inspectors, destroy Pangrev's orbital base, and finally lure the Odelotian into a fatal confrontation in Earth space without the support of his race's defence cruisers.

Similar opportunities for adventure abound in this setting. Players might take the parts of human, or Odelotian, agents trying to uncover the plans, and hidden weapons, of the other side while keeping their own race's treaty violations a secret. Alternatively they might choose to play official treaty inspectors from either of the two sides, or from one of the neutral cultures that didn't take part in the Thermal war. Such inspectors must inevitably combine espionage with their official duties, and are always under threat from the people they are inspecting.

In either case the players will have their work cut out if they wish to prevent the 5th Thermal War from breaking out in their life time!

DEATHWHEEL

The Xerkonian War

Not all enemies of Earth are aliens. The Xerkonian Empire is an autocratic human society at odds with the Terran Federation. When the borders of the Federation and the Empire touched war became inevitable, and like most internecine conflicts the fighting has been all the fiercer for being between related peoples.

Both the Terrans and the Xerkonians (or dirty Xerkies as the earthlings would have it) are evenly matched, with similar technology, weapons and standing armies. Both employ medium sized capital Starships armed with beam weapons, as well as smaller fighter craft. The mainstay of the Xerkonian forces is the warpfighter, a short range single pilot craft armed with laser weapons and homing mines. The Terran equivalent is the Pin-fighter (or Positron Interceptor Fighter), a similar though more streamlined craft. All out assaults on opposing worlds are discouraged by the strategic gamma missiles. These weapons are capable of destroying whole fleets, and the worlds that launched them, though neither side is keen to use them. Instead they have hidden gamma missile launch sites on isolated moons and asteroids, using them as a deterrent similar to the nuclear missile submarines of old Earth.

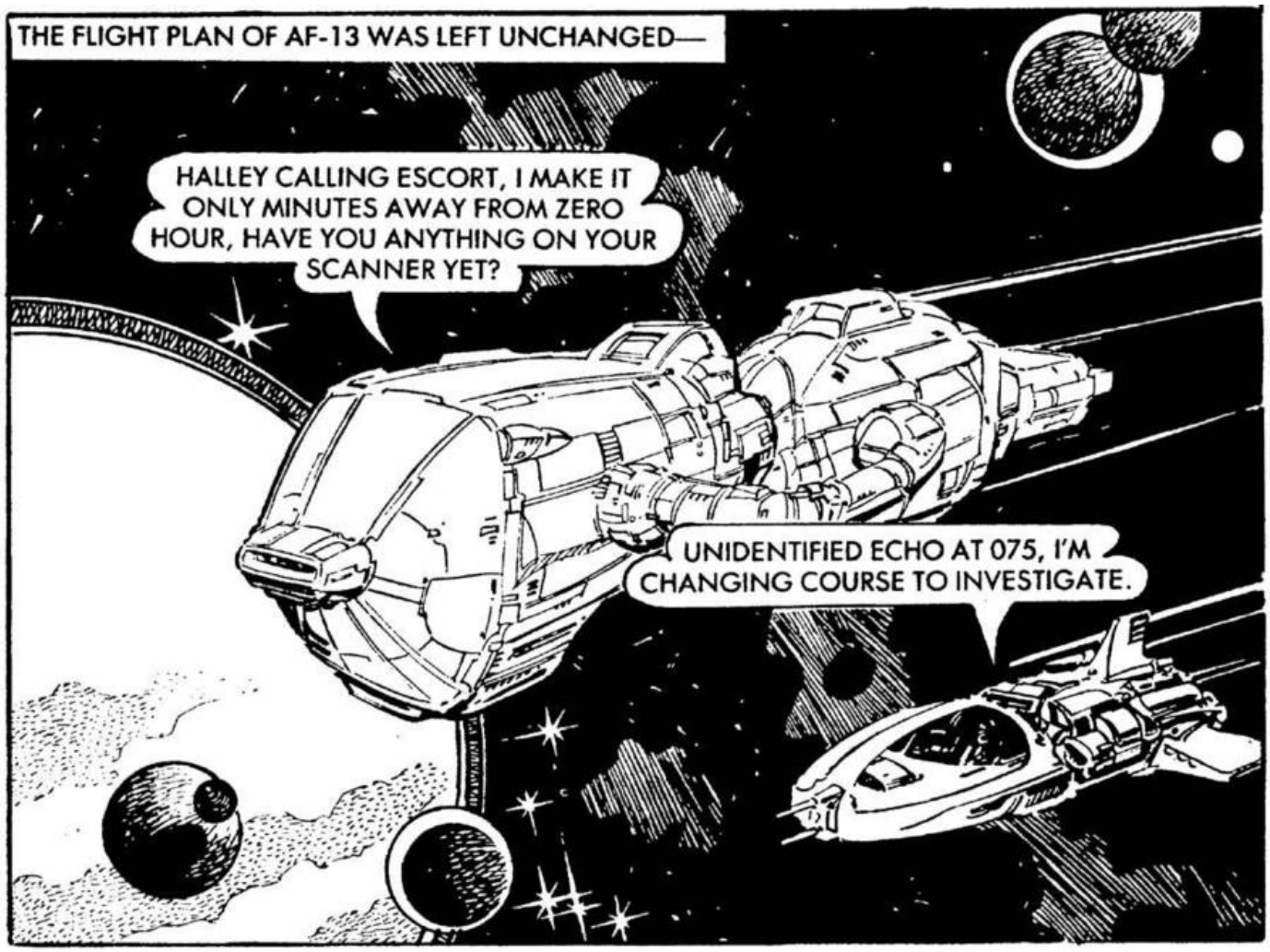
With the war locked into a stalemate, and other human and alien powers determined to remain neutral in the conflict, both the Xerkonians and the Terrans have devoted everything to developing some sort of super weapon to tip the balance. Whichever side is first to deploy such a weapon will surely have a significant advantage.

Covert War

In the meantime both powers have turned to subterfuge to try and tip things in their favour. Specialist forces like the Terran Space Assault Service (or SAS) and their Xerkonian equivalent the Imperial Counter-Espionage Agency (ICE) mount raids and sabotage missions on their foes, as well as staging undercover operations to spy on troop movements and steal plans. The many neutral systems provide a perfect battleground for this secret war, and both sides have little regard for the human and alien races not involved in the conflict, being quite content to smuggle weapons through neutral ports or steal valuable items from unaffiliated races if they think it will help their cause.

Both side's special forces make perfect employers for player characters. SAS and ICE troopers are trained to fight independently, and are issued with the tools to do it, such as powerful heavy blasters, autoscan computers, and anti-grav flight packs. Special force troopers are also given the vital skills of infiltration; unarmed combat, disguise, alien languages, lock picking, and computer hacking. Specialists like the SAS mechanics are trained in making field repairs, and given the technical know-how to improvise weapons and battle plans.

Small squads of special forces are regularly sent out on long term deep space missions. Using unmarked freighters equipped with Cyclone Fortifier shields they slip through the broad fields of space ice that mark


THE FLIGHT PLAN OF AF-13 WAS LEFT UNCHANGED—
HALLEY CALLING ESCORT, I MAKE IT ONLY MINUTES AWAY FROM ZERO HOUR, HAVE YOU ANYTHING ON YOUR SCANNER YET?
UNIDENTIFIED ECHO AT 075, I'M CHANGING COURSE TO INVESTIGATE.

the disputed zones between the two sides, turning up in neutral ports with falsified flight plans and papers. A squad of player characters might easily be sent off on such a mission and left to their own devices for weeks, far from the oversight of their hidebound commanders.

The Deathwheel

Of course as fruitful as such sabotage missions may be the real prize is information on each side's super weapons. Unbeknownst to the Terrans, who are still far from developing something to take the war to the Xerkonians the Xerkies have already perfected their new weapon, the Deathwheel. As large as a space station, but mobile, the Deathwheel is a circular battle station protected by deflector screens capable of resisting any weapon in the Terran arsenal short of gamma missiles. Specially engineered high energy beams capable of detonating a gamma missile outside of it's effective blast radius complete the defences. The most awesome part of the Deathwheel is the wheel itself, a spinning saw of super hardened ion blades mounted to the front of the Deathwheel's hub which is capable of cutting through the energy screens of Terran ships as if they didn't exist.

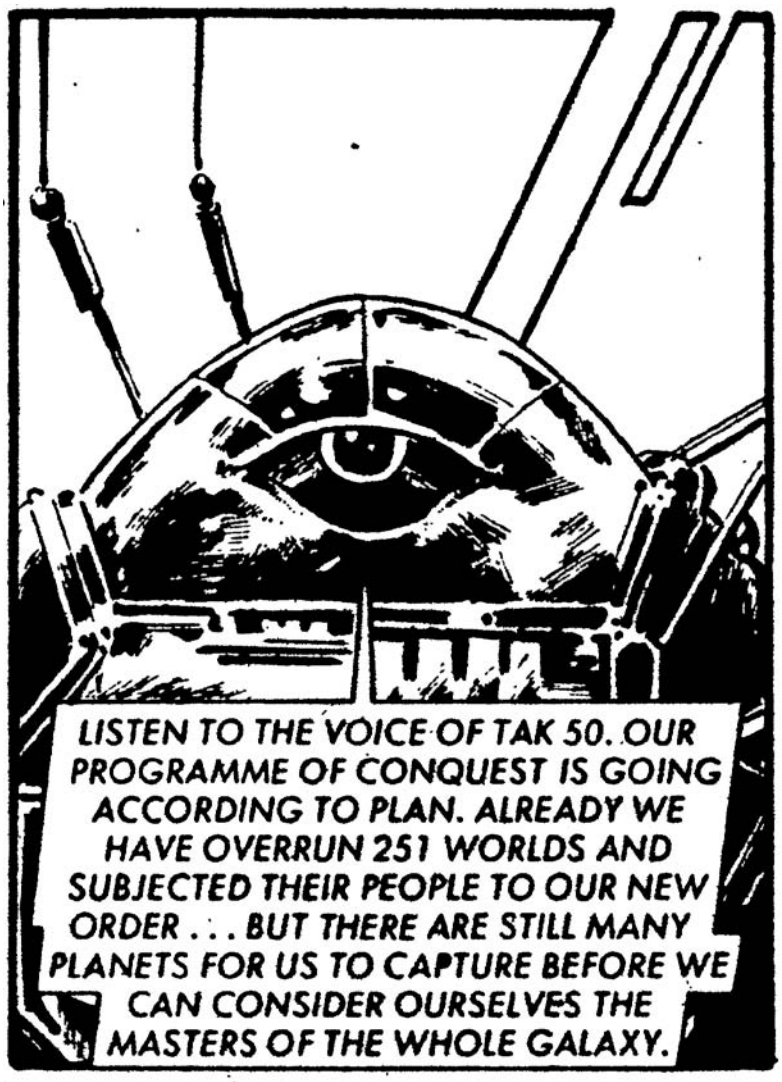
Although the Deathwheel must close with it's targets to put the ion blades to use it's impenetrable defences mean that it is capable of taking on space stations, capital ships, and even planet surface cities, all without taking a scratch in return. Under the command of Elite Xerkonian guards it is, of course, on course for Earth!

The Deathwheel's only weakness is that it's ion blades are vulnerable to extremely dense substances such as Neutronium or Dwarf Silver, which can be extracted from the hearts of Dwarf stars. The impact of such substances with the blades would rip the Deathwheel to pieces inside the bubble of its own anti-gravity field.

Ever cautious, the Xerkonians have moved to secure any sources of such materials outside the Xerkonian Empire itself. For example the neutral world Phragnos, which has a sample of Dwarf Silver on display in the museum of it's capital city, has been infiltrated by soldiers from the ICE who have taken the planet's high council prisoner and stationed Xerkonian elite guardsmen inside the museum until they can work out a way to remove or destroy the Dwarf Silver. SAS agents who learn of the existence of the Deathwheel, and can successfully work out it's fatal flaw, will no doubt run into similar covert Xerkonian forces wherever they go.

Deathwheel

In ***Starblazer*** Issue no. 140 ***Deathwheel,*** an SAS infiltration mission to the neutral space port of Suiz stumbles across a Xerkonian patrol. In the ensuing battle two SAS mechanics, Brewer and Flint, are left behind. Managing to hijack a Xerkonian patrol craft the two follow the retreating Warpfighters back to the Deathwheel, where they learn of it's intended course, as well as it's vulnerability, by hacking into it's central computer. Fleeing the Deathwheel they warn earth, but when it cuts through the earth defences with ease the two begin a desperate mission to Phragnos to secure the Dwarf Silver before it is too late.


LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF TAK 50. OUR PROGRAMME OF CONQUEST IS GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN. ALREADY WE HAVE OVERRUN 251 WORLDS AND SUBJECTED THEIR PEOPLE TO OUR NEW ORDER . . . BUT THERE ARE STILL MANY PLANETS FOR US TO CAPTURE BEFORE WE CAN CONSIDER OURSELVES THE MASTERS OF THE WHOLE GALAXY.

The Moonstealers

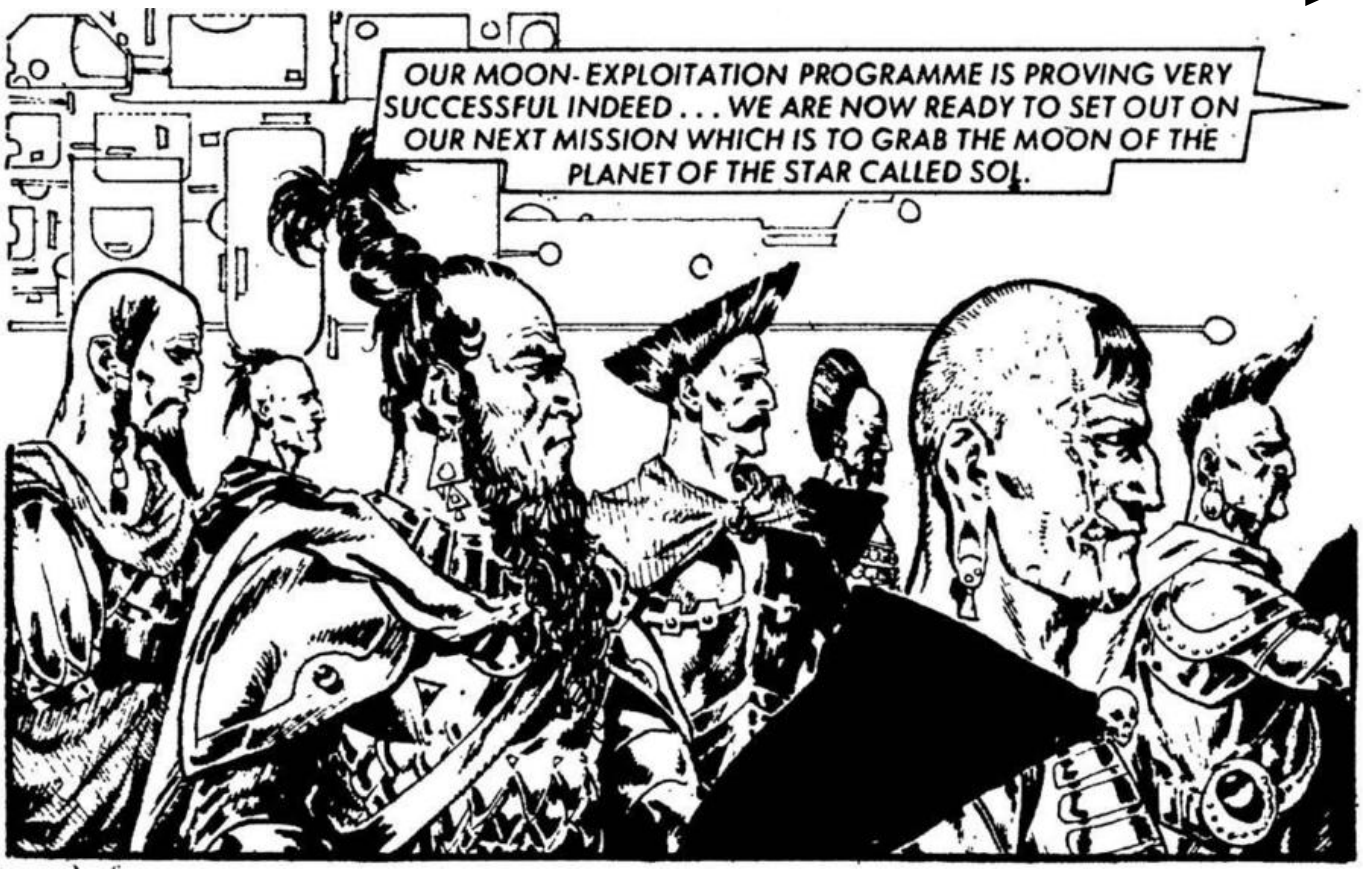
Joaphat is a planet swallowed in factories, dwellings, spacefields and industry, without a single acre of soil left behind. It is a city world with no resources of it's own but ambitions to conquer the galaxy, and it achieves both ends by sending it's warships to destroy and consume the moons of other worlds, stealing their resources and leaving devastated planets behind.

Joaphat is ruled by the tyrannical will of the giant computer Tak 50, which governs all processes and decisions of the metal planet. From the orbit of the giant star Arcturus the Joaphs send out their mining fleets, led by huge Mother Ships. When they reach their target worlds the Warlords send demolition crews to smash the moons to pieces with proton charges and neutron detonators before hauling the raw ore back to Joaphat where ever-hungry furnaces consume every atom for power or weapons. The gravitational disturbances caused by destroying their moons leaves most worlds in no shape to resist the Joaph forces.

Joaph armies are already in control of 251 worlds and plan the conquest of more. Occupied worlds bow to Joaph soldiers in their horned helmets, adopt the Joaph fashion for complex hair styles and long beards, and look up to see not moons but orbiting Joaph warships. Tak 50, built by a generation of Joaphs now long dead, is dedicated to the concept of a perfectly orderly society, run much like the machines that make up most of Joaphat. It is also equally dedicated to the concept of Joaph supremacy, as are the many warlords that serve it. Tak 50 dreams of the impossible task of subjecting the whole of the Galaxy to the rule of Joaphat.

Target Earth

Enter the people of Earth, the next target of Joaphat. Although Joaphat is far from Sol it's fleets are equipped with hyperspacial drives that make


OUR MOON-EXPLOITATION PROGRAMME IS PROVING VERY SUCCESSFUL INDEED . . . WE ARE NOW READY TO SET OUT ON OUR NEXT MISSION WHICH IS TO GRAB THE MOON OF THE PLANET OF THE STAR CALLED SOL.

the journey a plausible one. The warlord assigned to the invasion of Earth, Krob-Gaunt, plans to use the classic Joaph tactics, first to mine and destroy the moon, then to strike at any remaining resistance from the safety of his Mother Ship, using beamers and smaller escort ships. Only when all enemies have been crushed will landing craft set Joaph foot-soldiers down on the surface of Earth.

Despite the enormous power of Joaphat it's war fleets are stretched thin governing it's occupied worlds, and Earth is a more technologically advanced foe than most of it's targets. For this reason the invasion is taking some time to plan, and Krob-Gaunt is forced to attack the moons of unoccupied worlds to gather the resources necessary to mount the attack.

It is at this point that player characters might encounter the Joaphs, witnessing their mining fleets at work in isolated systems like Zeeba 97, or otherwise getting wind of their invasion plans. Despite the orderliness of Joaph society their world is so vast and busy that it is easy to approach from space, and once on the surface, perhaps by landing craft or molecular transporter, it is easy to move around if the would be spies can get hold of Joaph helmets or magnetic passes.

Preventing the Invasion is a much harder prospect. Even if Krob-Gaunt and his fleet could be defeated, on Joaphat or off it, Tak 50's determination is endless and it's armies equally so. It has many warlords on Joaphat, and many more stationed on it's occupied worlds. Given time it can recover from any defeat and it is unlikely to forget an enemy that threatens it's aim to be Master of the Galaxy.

True victory requires not just halting the Joaph fleet before it can blow Earth's moon to pieces, but striking at Tak 50 itself. Persuading the giant computer to change it's plans might be nearly impossible, but it could be that it's Warlords could be made to doubt Tak's wisdom. Alternatively an uprising on one or more of the key Joaph occupied worlds might well make the metal planet turn it's attention elsewhere.

The Joaph Enemy

Joaphat's greatest strength lies in it's space fleets, and most of all the heavily defended Mother Ships that form the core of the Moonstealing fleets. Although the smaller escort ships are effective enough they are not as well armed as some Earth vessels and lack the protective energy shields that defend the command ship. Although Joaph ships can use almost any form

of fuel they are energy hungry and always in need of more resources to maintain the fight. If it were not for their moon destroying tactics Joaphat would not have been nearly so successful in war.

When a Joaph fleet approaches a target world the Mother Ship takes up station around the moon and sends out space armoured demolition crews to destroy it. These crews are armed with proton charges, specialist weapons that have the power to crack a small moon into pieces. Detonated from the Mother Ship it is these charges that actually pulverise the moon, after which the ships move in to grab the pieces and load them on to the unarmed ore carrying ships which always follow the fleet. The shock-waves and gravitational disturbances of the blast are enough to crack the crust of the world below and put a quick end to any thoughts of resistance.

Joaph soldiers wear large curving helmets, usually decorated with horns or spines, and carry blaster rifles as well as broad bladed swords or energy hand weapons. Higher ranking warriors adopt fantastically ornate spiked and segmented armour, with the most important wearing broad shouldered robes decorated with cloaks and studded plates. Despite their effective weapons most Joaph soldiers are not used to opposition; they generally face disorganised and defeated foes.

The Moonstealers

In ***Starblazer*** no. 29, ***The Moonstealers***, two Earth explorers, Magnus Cogg and Jack Pye discover the Joaph plan after following Krob-Gaunt through hyperspace and infiltrating the Hall of Wisdom where Tak 50 addresses his warlords. Uniting the warring factions of a then divided Earth they manage to defeat Krob-Gaunt's invasion fleet before it can destroy the moon and then take the battle back to Joaphat. Using the power of the Devestator, Earth's ultimate weapon, they fight off the defensive fleet and manage to end the Joaph threat once and for all by destroying Tak 50 directly.

The Seeds of Madness

Not all of the dangers facing mankind as he expands into the Galaxy are as obvious as battle fleets or alien races set on conquest. Some worlds harbour life

forms so deadly that they are declared off-limits as soon as they are found, but few hold dangers that can threaten the galaxy as a whole. One as yet undiscovered world, however, holds just that.

What human star charts mark as Percana III, an as yet unexplored world far from the spaceways, was once the home of the Merkalians. An advanced but peaceful race with no interest in space travel the Merkalians lived in elegant and open stone cities in the midst of fertile savannas. The Merkalians' greatest achievements lay in the manipulation of plants, and over the centuries their advanced botany tailored the biosphere of Merkalia to provide a perfect and pleasant environment. Once form of specially tailored trees provided them with habitation, while another produced fruit all year round, and yet another grew cloth ready made from it's branches.

Not content with such bounty the Merkalian scientists laboured on their greatest project yet, to endow their plant brothers with intelligence equal to their own. For many years they worked to give plants a sense of self, of purpose, and of desire, and this, of course, was to prove their downfall. Inevitably a product of their experiments escaped the lab in which it was created and spread rapidly through the tamed biosphere of Merkalia. Sadly for the Merkalians this escapee was no intelligent brother, but a barely sentient super grass with an all consuming desire to spread.

Once free from the lab the super grass quickly overran all other plants on Merkalia, and in the process destroyed the race which had created it. Now all that remains of their once great civilisation are a few tumbled stone ruins in the midst of a planet drowned in giant grass.

The Grass of Merkalia

The Grass of Merkalia is not simply an incredibly rapid growing plant that can easily out-compete most other species, it is also capable of striking against other lifeforms directly. When disturbed the grass releases vast clouds of macroscopic spores which will quickly infect any mammalian lifeform that breathes them in. Once inhaled the spores rapidly germinate and send tendrils into the brains and nerve centres of the infected creature.

Infiltrated by the grass spores the unfortunate being quickly goes mad. They are consumed by immense rage and a need to strike out at, and destroy, any creature that stands in their way. At the same time they are possessed with an urge to escape wherever they currently are and travel as far and as quickly as possible. The more they are confined when they are infected the more overwhelming is the urge to escape and scatter, all the while carrying the insidious grass spores within them.

When the carriers die, and die they will even if no one opposes them, since the spore infestation is inevitably fatal, the grass spores within their system rapidly germinate, thrusting through the surface of the dead body, which they consume as a macabre fertiliser. Blades of alien grass burst from the corpse, rapidly growing to maturity and then releasing their own clouds of spores to repeat the process. Left alone they will soon also take root outside the body and begin to spread in the normal fashion.

Even though they are driven crazy by the infection the creatures possessed by the Merkalian grass do not lose their intelligence. They can still use weapons, operate machinery, and fly space craft; in short do anything necessary to spread the grass further and faster. The grass stimulates great strength in those it infects, making them capable of breaking bonds and easily shrugging off the effects of stun weapons. Worse it also removes the imperative of self protection. A man infected by the grass will readily sacrifice himself if it allows his fellow infectees to proceed … and of course more grass and more spores will pour from his body when he does!

The peaceful Merkalians stood no chance against their grass, and it is hard to imagine humanity faring any better should they have the ill chance to stumble upon that cursed planet … unless they learn of the grass's one weakness.

Deadly Radiation

There is a certain type of radiation that is deadly to the Merkalian grass. Exposure to enough of it will prevent the spores from sprouting and cause the fully grown grass to wither. A little more and the grass is utterly destroyed, the spores crumble to dust and the plant itself withers and dies. Perfectly judged it is possible to create a radiation wave capable of eradicating the grass filaments from within a living host, curing them of the madness.

This radiation is produced from only two sources, plasteen, a form of hyperdrive fuel (similar to Xenobium) or from suns stimulated with plasteen

fuelled nova initiators. Radiation produced from raw Plasteen can never be enough to halt the spread of the grass, but if a sun can be stimulated to produce a pulse of radiation a whole system can be cleansed and saved at once ... provided that the sun doesn't go nova in the process.

The seeds of madness

In ***Starblazer*** no. 161, ***The Seeds of Madness***, lawmen Ched and Balik chase a plasteen smugglers ship through hyperspace and end up on the surface of Merkalia (it goes unnamed in the issue). Though the lawmen are protected from the spores by breather masks the two smugglers are infected. Knowing nothing of the grass the lawmen take the smugglers back to Justice World, an orbiting law enforcement base. There they prisoners break free and, when they are killed, release clouds of spores that quickly infect many of the station's inhabitants. Despite a desperate defence from the law agents the infected quickly spread to Capal II and overrun the inhabitants, spreading death and grass wherever they go.

Luckily for the humans Capal II happens to be a source of Plasteen, and with the help of a part-cybernetic scientist called Mort the lawmen launch an audacious plan to stimulate the sun into producing a plasteen radiation wave to kill the grass before the infected can spread to other worlds. Harried and attacked by the infected wherever they go the plan almost fails, but at the last moment they are able to release the radiation and save the day ... until the next innocent traveller stumbles upon the grass of madness!

The Infernal Triangle

In a distant solar system three planets orbit in close proximity, Colonia, Holci and Monta. All three worlds are populated by humans with no contact with the rest of the galaxy; they are isolated, and locked in a constant struggle. Although the leaders of all three worlds communicate in regular holographic conferences there is little love lost between them. Generally Holci and Monta unite against the more powerful Colonia, but this is by no means always the case.

The hatred between the three planets is both cultural and religious, with Colonia's Imperial religion at odds with the more animistic faiths of Holci and Monta, but there are still periods of relative peace, and travel between the worlds, especially for trade, is common. All three planets orbit close enough together that the space between them can be easily crossed by one man rocket cycles and small ships.

Colonia

Colonia is the most advanced of the three worlds, and exists under the rulership of a single world Emperor (It is currently Imperial year 1308) as well as a council of ministers who hold the real power on the planet under a Governor. Notable locations include the Holy city of Thermon, the ancient town of Kub Ansar, as well as the Imperial Capital, which is protected by force shields. It is an agricultural world with broad fields, low hills, and stone cities on wide rivers.

Colonia is a militarised world with a large standing army and a powerful cabal of Generals who employ personal soldiers who dress in animal masks and carry swords, though the general troopers of the army wear combat battle fatigues and carry projectile rifles. Though prosperous and more advanced technologically than the other two planets Colonia is a repressive world with an undercurrent of racism and violence. A perfect example are the masked killers who lurk in the back alleys of the Colonian capital.

Holci

Holci is a swampy and forested world with vast expanses of mist shrouded jungles. Holcan towns are small, concealed in the swamps by both trees and holographic screens that make them almost impossible to find. Unlike Colonia, Holci was inhabited by indigenous aliens before the humans arrived. These swamp flesh eaters, or Synns, are insectoid humanoids, with one large central eye and huge jaws. Despite their fierce appearance they co-habit peacefully with the humans and willingly fight on their side against invaders, though they do not travel to Colonia or Monta.

The tribal settlements of Holci elect members of a planet-wide assembly which in turn elects a smaller ruling council whose leader represents the planet in dealings with Colonia and Monta. The people of Holci have adopted the animist religion of the Synns, and regard the organised faith of Colonia as pagan.

Monta

Monta is primarily a water planet, with huge oceans making up more than 90% of it's surface area. The Montans make good use of the countless rocky

islands, filling them with fortified cities, castles, and small perfect gardens. On the ocean itself many Montans spend most of their lives aboard giant ships, slowly circumnavigating the globe, or conducting trading expeditions between smaller circuits of islands. Unsurprisingly the people of Monta depend heavily on the bounty of the ocean; fish, plants, sea mammals and seabirds alike.

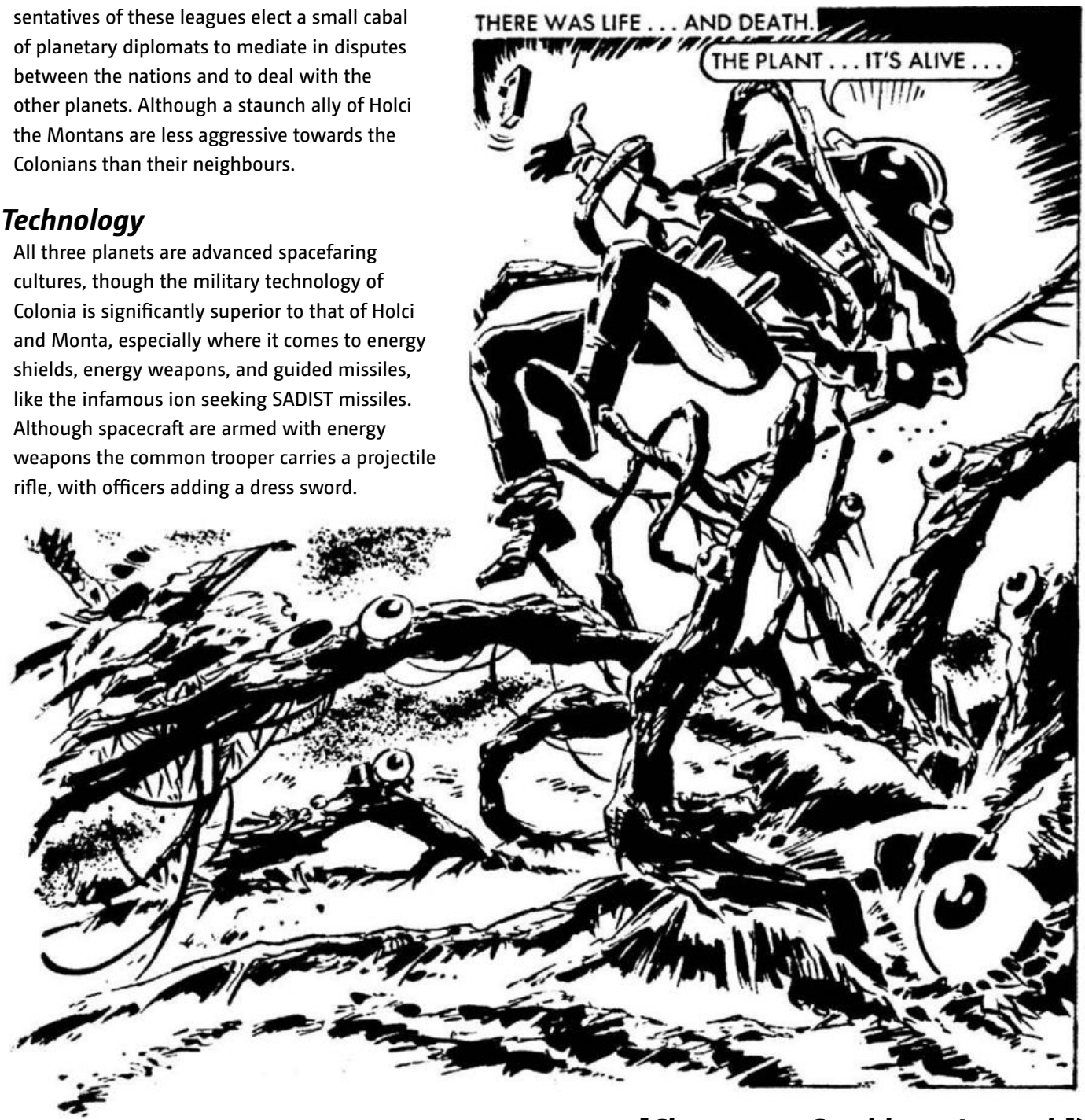
The people of Monta are very close to the sea, and are less likely to travel than the Holcans or Colonians. Many island cities are nations in their own right, or band together to form small leagues. Representatives of these leagues elect a small cabal of planetary diplomats to mediate in disputes between the nations and to deal with the other planets. Although a staunch ally of Holci the Montans are less aggressive towards the Colonians than their neighbours.

Technology

All three planets are advanced spacefaring cultures, though the military technology of Colonia is significantly superior to that of Holci and Monta, especially where it comes to energy shields, energy weapons, and guided missiles, like the infamous ion seeking SADIST missiles. Although spacecraft are armed with energy weapons the common trooper carries a projectile rifle, with officers adding a dress sword.

On all three planets small spacecraft are easy to come by, and may be owned by families of traders moving from world to world. Larger ships are much less common, but even the smaller ships have interplanetary capability, right down to one person space bikes used by the forces of Holci. On the ground simpler vehicles such as boats or tracked cars (or on Holci amphibious vehicles) predominate, and none of the worlds has long range mass transport systems.

Other notable technologies are man sized hover packs, holographic projectors and screens (although



flat panel displays are more common than holograms except in government buildings and public stadia), Personal radios are more common than phones, and paper is still the main medium for making notes. Indeed all three planets share the same gothic alphabet, and speak a common language. Fashions are also similar on all three worlds, with baggy velvet clothes, soft renaissance style hats, and short capes predominating.

Despite their technological advancement the common people of Colonia live in relatively crowded and simple conditions, although the elite enjoy expensive holiday resorts.

The Fate of the Infernal Triangle

In ***Starblazer*** No. 188, ***The Infernal Triangle***, a series of devastating attacks between Holci and Colonia lead to the Colonian Governor building a huge particle beamer and destroying Holci outright, which led in turn to Monta and Colonia colliding. Some similar, if not quite so cataclysmic, fate seems almost inevitable if conditions continue as they are, but peace, understanding, or expansion to new worlds, might yet change the fate of The Infernal Triangle.

The Seas of Samor

The Samorian Invaders

By the start of the 23rd Century the people of Earth had done a fine job of reducing themselves and their world to ruin, trying to survive in the radiation blasted aftermath of the fourth nuclear war. They hardly needed the aliens from Samor to invade, but invade they did, and Earth has been their prisoner ever since.

The aggressive Samorians had spread out from their home world searching for new worlds to conquer. Earth was a perfect target, advanced enough to be worth looting, weak enough to be no match for the Samor Starships. What space power the earthlings still had was quickly crushed and Earth became a Samorian protectorate.

Thirty years later Earth is firmly in the grip of Samor. Humans are taught that their Samorian masters are superior in every way, and their purpose in life is to server them. Like inmates in a prison, humans are assigned individual identification numbers instead of names, and are constantly guarded and monitored by hovering spyeyes and armed soldiers. Trusted workers are given special privileges so long as they agree to report on traitors amongst their fellows; dissenters are worked to death on the demolition gangs.

The Samorians

The Samorians are an aggressive and technologically advanced race with a superficial similarity to humans. Shorter and more heavily built than men the Samorians have scaly reptilian skin, large jaws, thick heavy brows, and deep set hostile eyes. Apart from their black bushy eyebrows they are altogether hairless, with high domed heads covered in blotches. Their home world is similar to Earth in gravity and atmosphere, but drowned in water, though the Samorians evolved in an age where there was more dry land. Indeed it was the collapse of Samor's ice caps and the flooding of its landmasses that first drove them into space.

Travelling first in slow colony ships, and then in warships driven by the wonder mineral Xenobium, the Samorians have expanded relentlessly ever since, subjugating or fighting every race they have encountered, though humans have proven to be their most successful conquest by far. With the resources, and slave labour, of Earth at their disposal, the Samorians have entered into a new Golden Age.

Samorian culture is heavily militarised, with a large percentage of their population stationed in occupation garrisons, or working to supply the fleets with Xenobium fuel. Samorian soldiers are armed with Xenobium powered blasters, and equipped with Xenobium enhanced power suits, which they wear along with polished helmets. Officers wear similar garb decorated with epaulets and sashes denoting their rank. The Imperial symbol of Samor, an eight pointed star, is worn by favoured troops, while lower ranking Samor have other designs, like the two rectangles marking the work gang supervisors.

The Samor are well equipped with advanced technology, far surpassing anything possessed by humanity even before the last war. They have a large fleet of space craft, ranging from sleek sub-light interceptors to vast Starfighters like the F-111 and interstellar transport ships. On planets they employ a variety of submersibles, as well as smaller flying craft and automated gun towers, as well as the remote controlled spyeyes.

Xenobium

The secret of the Samorians power is the super-mineral Xenobium, which provides near limitless energy for all their ships and weapons. Available only from the second moon of the planet Ethor, which the Samorians discovered early in their expansion from Samor, Xenobium is, more than anything, the key component in the Samorians interstellar hyper-drive. Without Xenobium the Samorian Empire would collapse in days, and so they keep its source a closely guarded secret from all but the most trusted of their human slaves. Without Xenobium there is no Samor.

Human Resistance

It might seem that human resistance is truly futile in the face of the Samorian might, but there is a resistance, and a surprisingly well organised one. Operating from hidden and radiation-proofed under-ground shelters and power stations built before the fourth Nuclear War they have successfully eluded the Samorians, who have little idea of the extent of their enemies.

The resistance, in contrast, is very well informed about their Samorian overlords. Indeed many of the supposedly trusty humans working for the Samorian guards are in fact spying on their masters. Over the years the resistance has been able to rescue certain key experts from under the noses of the Samorian guards, and has put them to work on weapons to use against the invaders, such as robots, stolen blasters, and their crowning hope, a scratch built copy of a Samorian F-111 Starfighter. The rebel leader Ubira dreams of launching this ship from Earth and using it to seize the Xenobium mines, destroy Samor, or free Earth.

Sadly despite their efforts their secret spaceship is far from spaceworthy. For now the rebels must content themselves with rescuing people from the Demolition gangs and stealing secrets from the Samorians, knowing that at any moment they might be discovered and destroyed, or that they might find the vital information they need to strike back at the Samorians and finally win their freedom.

The Seas of Samor

In ***Starblazer*** no. 34, ***The Seas of Samor***, the rebels rescue the engineer Athor 28659 from death at the hands of a spyeye. With his help the F-111 is completed and launched against Samor itself. Although the Starfighter is soon destroyed its crew escape and through a combination of luck and bravery manage to steal a Samorian freighter filled with Xenobium. Using this they destroy the unstable second moon of Ethor, stopping the flow of Xenobium once and for all and crippling the Samorians. With the weapons of the freighter, and the last cargo of Xenobium fuel, they rescue their comrades on Earth and begin the slow process of reconstructing the planet and rehabilitating the Samorians trapped alongside them.

The Star Destroyers

Hatred of the Vonans

Not every enemy of Earth is motivated by a desire to conquer or steal resources, and not every war is fought openly in the depths of space. Once such enemy are the Vonans, and their plan to defeat Earth is as insidious as they come.

The Death of Vonoi

Once, long ago, the Vonans were a race of humanoids with a remarkable resemblance to humans. They lived and prospered on their home world of Vonoi until their ageing sun began to flare, sending deadly radiation sweeping across the planet. Anticipating the danger, and unable to flee en-masse, the Vonans built underground cities, and a computer intelli-gence called the Magister, and hoped to wait out the natural disaster.

Sadly for the Vonans even this preparation was not enough when their sun went Nova, baking the surface of Vonoi and burning it to a crisp. All life on the surface of Vonoi was destroyed, the seas baked away and even the rocks burnt. Many Vonans died in their underground refuges, and those few that survived found the air of their world infused with deadly radiation that struck them down as soon as they ventured to the surface.

Luckily for the few survivors the Magister was able to construct sophisticated masks which enabled the Vonans to survive the poisoned atmosphere and begin to set up a new life on the scarred surface. Although the Vonans found themselves sterilized, and utterly dependant on the masks for life, they also discovered that they appeared to be effectively immortal, and so set about building a new society based around the worship of the Magister. Their greatest effort, the kilometre high tower known as Cloudsplicer, became

known as one of the wonders of the Galaxy when the Vonans were eventually discovered by younger space faring races like humanity.

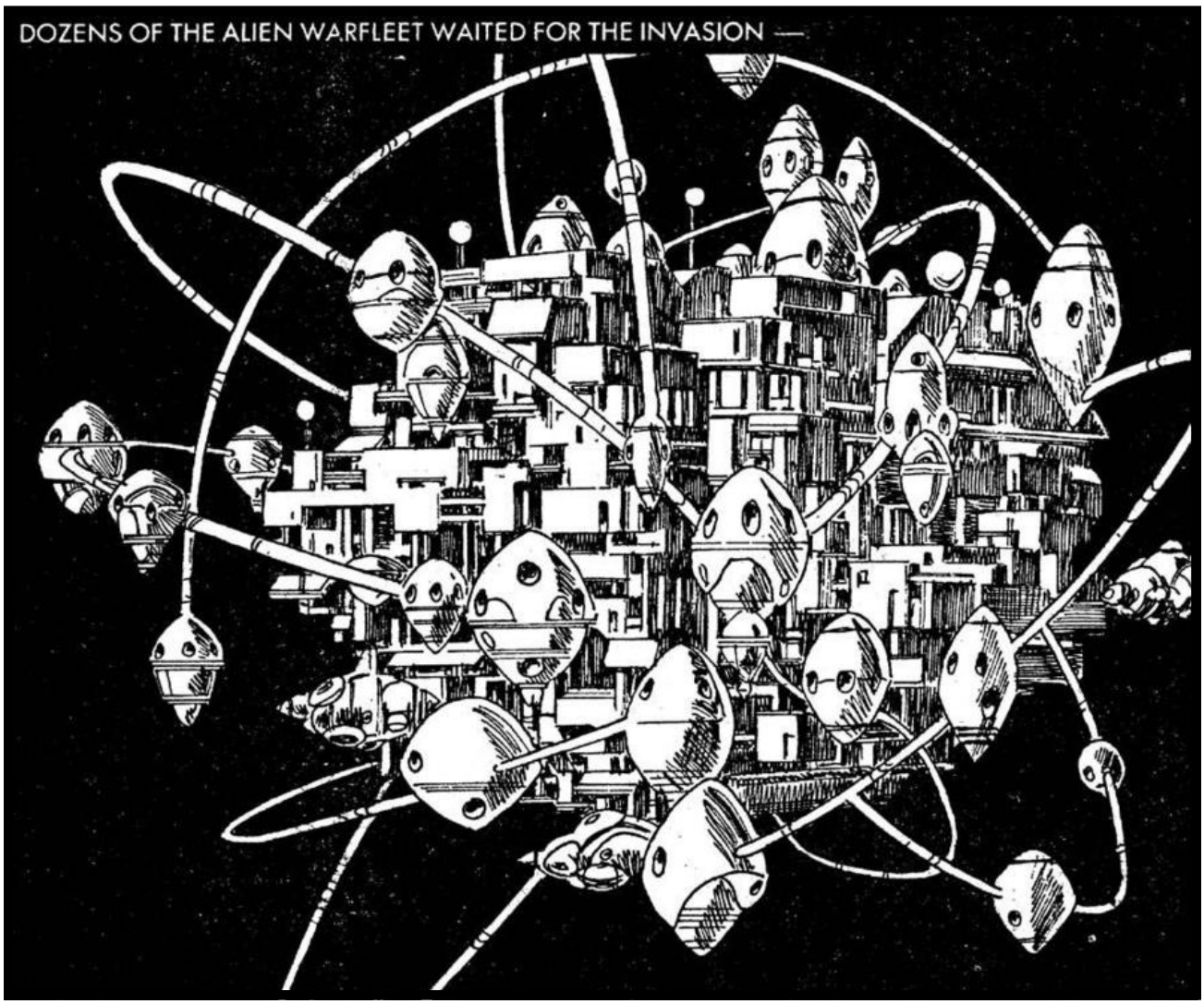
In a wider Galaxy of many races the Vonans were known as just another minor species, albeit one with a well known jealousy of other humanoid races, especially humans themselves. Of the history narrated here, nothing was ever told.

A lurking evil

So things might have remained if the Magister's promise of immortality had been true, but although the Vonan masks conferred enormously expanded life spans on their wearers, they were not really immortal. Beneath their apparently human faces the Vonans become steadily more and more like corpses. Their flesh withered away down to their skulls and their bodies became weak without the masks to boost their strength. Soon the Vonans could not survive more than a few minutes without their masks, even in clean atmospheres, and came to realise that they would die even with them.

The Vonan tragedy might have become a cause for interspecies aid, if they had ever made it public. Instead they nursed a festering jealousy of all the other races that had not suffered the same arbitrary disasters as them. They looked at humanity and thought "That could have been us", and they made the fateful decision that if they were doomed to die then they would not let any of these inferior races outlive them.

Although the power of the Magister is enormous, allowing it to create almost any thing by the manipulation of force fields, it is limited to the solar system of Vonoi. Lacking armies or battle fleets the Vonans instead turned to stealth and infiltration to defeat their enemies. Using their masks as disguises Vonan agents began to secrete themselves in positions of power, replacing planetary governors, generals, and high ranking officials in the galactic patrol. They also



set about taking positions in solar observatories on multiple worlds.

Using their knowledge of solar physics, gained from surviving their own sun, the Vonans planned to subject other worlds to the same fate that had struck their own, by causing their suns to explode. By launching neutronium bombs into the hearts of their suns, using teleporter launched missile ships, they will cause them to explode, wiping out billions of lives in the process. If the Vonans are not stopped they will destroy the sun of every human world before their time runs out.

Stopping the Vonans

In ***Starblazer*** no. 153, ***The Star Destroyers***, Agent Al Tafer of the Galactic Patrol is sent to investigate the world of Xeros III after the destruction of the star Thrax and its inhabited worlds. Battle computer analysis reveals that the destruction of Thrax could not have been an accident, and that if the pattern of mysterious novas continued then Xeros would be next.

On Xeros Tafer uncovers the Vonan impersonating the planetary governor and, although he manages to prevent the neutronium missile being launched into the sun, ends up on Vonoi itself. Taken prisoner he is brought before the Vonan council, which turns out to be nothing more than a hologram created by Magister. Learning of the Vonan plan to destroy all other races Tafer attempts to destroy Magister, who he believes is located in the Cloudsplicer, only to discover that the tower too is nothing but an illusion!

When all seems lost Tafer manages to trap Magister in a logical loop, telling it that although it believes itself to be all powerful it is in fact mistaken, because it is not capable of destroying itself. Like all Starblazer computers this logical conundrum drives Magister mad, and as Tafer flees the planet Magister destroys the sun of Vonoi once and for all, wiping out the Vonan race and itself. Back on the star base headquarters of the galactic patrol Tafer confronts the General who sent him on his mission, revealing him to be a Vonan too, before killing him. With this final act the nightmare of the Vonans is finally over.

When player characters become involved in the Vonan plot it is likely that they will attempt to defeat it by means less likely to fail than persuading Magister to commit suicide. Although Magister itself is immensely powerful, perhaps omnipotent in it's own world, the Vonan plans can be easily defeated if it's agents can be unmasked (literally) and prevented from launching their missiles. Even then, however, there are likely to be agents that slip through the net, masquerading as humans, and planning another form of vengeance before their time is finally up.

Warworld

The Valk Menace

Even when the Galaxy finds itself at peace there is always danger waiting in the wings. With the power of hyperdrives even the vast distances between galaxies can be crossed, and the most aggressive races always look to the stars for new conquests.

One such race of aggressors are the Valk, who originate in the Zeguma Galaxy many millions of light years from the Milky Way. The Valk are an arrogant and powerful race of reptilian bipeds with green scaled skin and powerful tooth filled jaws. Their hate filled yellow eyes peak out from under the flaring brims of their broad fluted helmet, and they wear heavy armour on their torsos and arms, while leaving most of their legs bare even while in combat. They are ready for combat at all times. Their armour can convert into a sealed suit suitable for space or under water, and they are never unarmed. The very concept of a non-combatant is meaningless to the Valk.

The Valk are equipped with ships of incredible power, more than a match for the best humanity has to often. The mainstay of their fighting forces are what they call cruisers, giant ovoid vessels more than ten times the size of a space fleet destroyer. These vessels are equipped with interstellar drives capable of crossing all but the vastest voids of intergalactic space, cloaking devices that can hide them from both sensors and visual observation, powerful energy cannons, gravity intensifier weapons, tractor beams, and neutralising rays that can disable the weapons and power systems of their enemies instantly. The cruisers are equipped with their own fleets of smaller support craft, as well as assault vessels which carry boarding tubes to cut through the hull's of their targets, as well as their own neutralizer rays.

The Warworld

The only weakness of the Valk cruisers, and it is small comfort, is their inability to cross the intergalactic void unaided. To solve this problem the Valk

constructed the Warworld, a truly enormous vessel loaded with Valk soldiers, fighter craft, and an entire fleet of cruisers ready to unleash upon the Milky Way. Lacking the resources to build more than one of these tremendous vessels the Valk have placed the Warworld at the vanguard of a fleet of slightly slower transport ships, each carrying further cruisers, fighters, and warriors across the void.

Travelling first the Warworld was to pave the way for the rest of the Valk invasion, securing a bridgehead and forming a command platform for the prosecution of a war. Unluckily for the Valk, however, as it arrived in the Scorpio 8 sector on the edge of our Galaxy it was struck by a rogue comet! Smashed from the sky it crashed into the seas of an uninhabited world where it lodged against a rocky island, three quarters under water. With almost all of the ships' hangers under the surface of the sea, and the engines too damaged to lift it clear, the Valk found themselves trapped with only one cruiser at their disposal and no way to warn the rest of the invasion fleet what had happened to them.

With only one working vessel and no spare parts to repair the Warworld the Valk set about finding themselves raw materials, by ambushing isolated human vessels and taking them prisoner. The vessels are dragged back to the warworld and broken down for spare parts to repair the warworld's engines, while the crews are put to work as forced labour, or used as guards to fight of the vicious underwater life forms that constantly threaten the Valk's repairs.

Deep Space Assault

So far the Valk have carefully avoided any space fleet Starships, but any merchant or civilian vessel in the Scorpio 8 sector is quickly attacked, to the point that Earth authorities are very concerned, though they have as yet found no evidence to tell them what has happened.

Target ships are followed by the cloaked cruiser until they are far from other vessels, and then assault ships are sent into the attack. Any defensive capabilities are overcome by the neutralizing rays, and then boarding tubes are bored through the hull to allow Valk troops to capture the crew. Only with the ship safely captured does the cruiser move in to two it back to the Warworld.

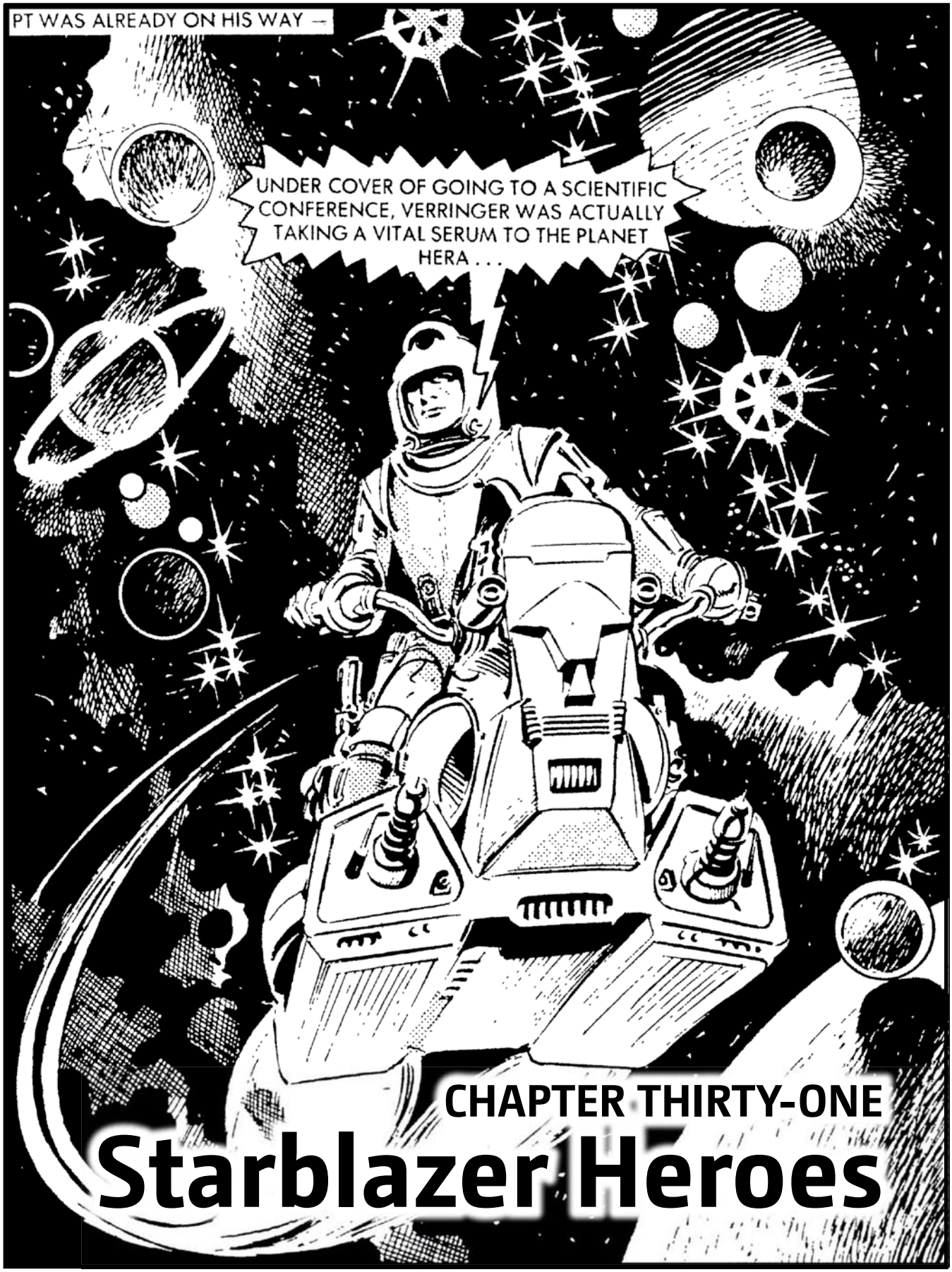
Once on the surface the brutal Valk kill any prisoners they deem to be useless, the weak and the wounded (though for some reason women and children are left alone). All remaining prisoners are fitted with headbands that can induce pain all the way to death, as any Valk solider is happy to demonstrate. Under the control of the headbands the prisoners have no choice but to serve the Valk, fighting a wide variety of deadly marine lifeforms, such as huge spiny fish, stinging jellyfish with an immunity to blasters, and the semi-intelligent Elver, humanoid eel creatures that hunt in packs and feed on the chemicals that the Valk use in their explosives.

This, of course, is the perfect place for player characters to find themselves caught up in this adventure. Characters could easily be passengers aboard an interstellar liner or transport craft ambushed by the Valk. They could even, as in ***Starblazer*** no. 157, ***Warworld***, be members of an elite strike force sent into the Scorpio 8 sector aboard a decoy civilian vessel.

Once captured and appraised of the Valk's intentions by other prisoners any captive worth his salt will want to escape and warn Earth, and enable the Space Fleet to catch the Warworld while it is still on the ground, but escape is not easy. Valk soldiers keep an almost constant watch on their workers, all of them carry the control wands for the pain headbands, and they are ready to use them. Even on those few occasions where the prisoners are out of sight, such as when they are in their cells, or when they are sent off to deal with some dangerous sea creature, there is almost nowhere to go. There is almost no dry land on the surface of the Valk world, and no fresh water to drink or plant life to eat. The only real chance of escape is to get a hold of one of the stranded fighters or other smaller craft aboard the Warworld and try to leave the planet in it. Doing so requires not only sabotaging the remote control that would allow the Valk to turn the ship around and fly it back, but escaping the enormous range of the pain control device, which the Valk will quickly employ to kill any fleeing prisoner.

In ***Starblazer*** 157 a Terran commando named Cobb manages to sabotage the remote controls on a Valk fighter, steal it, and knock himself out with anaesthetic gas before the pain control can kill him. Because of his bravery the Earth fleet catches the Warworld on the ground and destroys it. Just as much bravery will be required of any other characters attempting to save the galaxy from the might of the Valk!

Bryan Chavez (order #1042453)


PT WAS ALREADY ON HIS WAY —
UNDER COVER OF GOING TO A SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE, VERRINGER WAS ACTUALLY TAKING A VITAL SERUM TO THE PLANET HERA . . .

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

Starblazer Heroes

Starblazer Heroes

A host of familiar faces reappeared in many *Starblazer* issues. In this chapter you'll find summaries of the most memorable heroes from the pages of ***Starblazer***

MEANWHILE, FAR, FAR AWAY CARTER WAS ON HIS FIRST CASE WITH HIS NEW PARTNER—
I'M GOING IN, DOLAN! GET READY TO COME THROUGH THAT REAR ENTRANCE.
AFFIRMATIVE!

Francis Carter

Age: Estimated mid 30's
Hair Colour: Black
Height: About 6 foot 2 inches
Distinguishing features: Gold metallic looking headband, apparently related to the surgery he endured. Typically wears a high set shoulder holster on his right chest. Hair is cut short.
Occupation: Senior Law Enforcement Officer
Friends: Few, Carter easily makes enemies and even among his colleagues he is not well liked due to his mandroid nature that earns him a cold-blooded reputation. One of the few people he can count as a friend is his partner Nolan (Called Dolan in his first appearance in ***Carters Law***). Laura, his former fiancee, Carter lost contact with her for some years after his accident.
Acquaintances: The Chief, a high-ranking Law Enforcement Officer, Zak Carlson, former convict who was arrested by Carter. He became a world class athlete.
Enemies: Numerous.
Equipment: Carter never seems to carry much in the way of equipment. Typically his sidearm, badge, and a small amount of other police issue equipment. He usually wears police issue Permflex body armour. While the pay of a policeman may not be great, Carter has few, if any vices to spend it on.

Senior Law Enforcement Officer Francis Carter (usually referred to as Frank Carter, or just Carter), is another of the longer lasting characters in ***Starblazer***. First appearing in the issue ***Mandroid***, Carter would disappear for a time, later to appear in ***Carter's Law***. Here we get more of his back story and some of his motivations. Later issues reveal his past life including his accident that happened while he was shopping with his fiancée and his later disenchantment with a lot of the police force. Carter never seems to stay at one place for too long, often assigned to a Starship as basically a roving troubleshooter. This is perhaps because he tends to get on the nerves of officials in any police precinct he is assigned to.

Before the Accident

Carter, at the time a Provisional Law Enforcement Officer, basically a rookie, bumped, quite literally into Laura, an attractive dark haired woman. The more genial and openly friendly Carter asked for her number, Laura agreed. Some months later Carter proposed, by this time he had advanced past rookie stage and was a normal LEO. Shopping for an engagement ring, a nearby bank was being robbed. Carter at this time was officially off duty, but despite the protestations of Laura, he drew his service sidearm, intending to confront the perps. Handing a backup sidearm to Laura, he asked her to back him up, also pointing out that the gun was basically self aiming due to the advanced electronics and targeting systems inside. Laura was nervous around guns though, and Carter confronted the criminals with no effective cover. A gunfight ensued, Carter seemingly able to hold them off, but he was shot in the back of the head while the crooks made their escape. Carter was rushed to intensive care where emergency surgery of an extremely experimental nature was conducted to save Carter's life. While Carter lived, the gun blast had effectively destroyed the part of his brain that could feel emotion, a second reason why Carter is sometimes taunted with the Mandroid name.

Present

Carter is now a Senior Law Enforcement officer. As of the time of Carter's Law he was assigned a partner, Nolan. This was over Carters protests as he preferred to work alone. However, their first case involved Carl Ryker, a reclusive industrialist who was responsible for

B

attempting to grow a near dead alien race from microscopic samples found in deep space. At the start of the case, Carter has little time for the inexperienced, by the book Nolan, however, he recognises that Nolan does have some good gut instincts. By the end of the case Carter has gained a respect for Nolan and no longer resents him being around.

Carter is extremely proficient with the use of his large police issue Photon blaster, a sizeable and powerful firearm. These weapons are so restricted that the sight of one identifies it as a police weapon. He sometimes will use larger weapons, but does not seem to be as comfortable with them.

Carter is a good Starship pilot and gunner, skilled in the use of onboard weapons systems. He typically has at his disposal, a police 'cruiser' (a misleading term, it will usually be a ship of about Scout class size).

Carter does also seem to be extremely good at using ground hover vehicles, how much of this is due to his enhanced reactions is not known, but it would be fair to say that it will have some influence.

Carter's attitude can sometimes grate with authority figures, he tends to be rather 'in your face', and doesn't mind speaking his mind, even when it may offend or bring consequences on himself. (A prime example being Desolation City which caused him to be reassigned there as a rookie officer). His attitude is also part and parcel of his day to day police work. Carter is not above using force to get suspects to talk, like dangling them off buildings or chaining them to a ticking bomb.

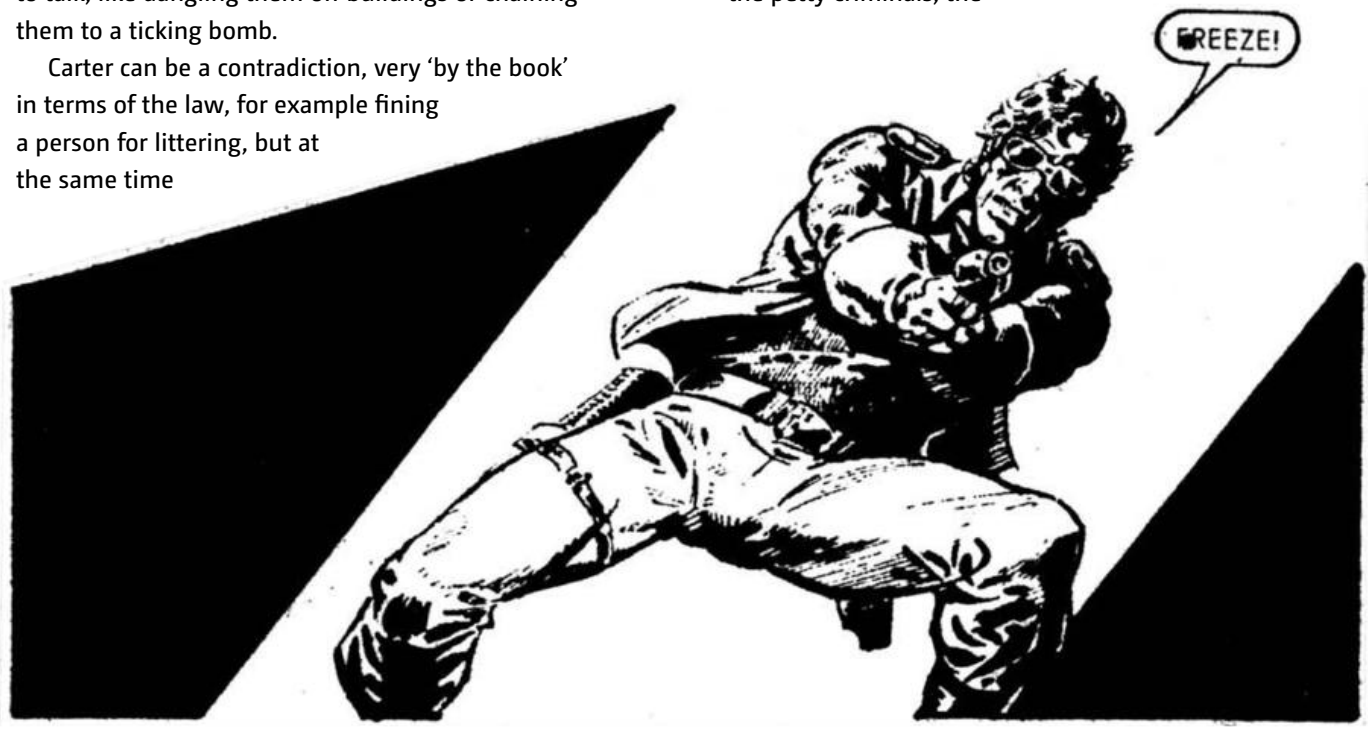
Carter can be a contradiction, very 'by the book' in terms of the law, for example fining a person for littering, but at the same time he can be very unconventional in his methods as noted above.

Carter seems to have had large parts of his body replaced by bionic replacements. At least one arm, and both legs. In addition his reflexes seem to be boosted as does his strength to a considerable degree. The downside is that every so often Carter must have his bionics checked to see if they are up to standard.

Mikal R Kayn

"The City was something else. A hypnotic jewel of ice... cold and awesome."

Age: Estimated mid 30's
Hair Colour: Brown
Height: About 5 foot 11 inches to 6 foot 1
Distinguishing features: Always wears a set of dark glasses, this was needed after an accident incurred in the line of duty.
Occupation: Private Detective. Former Star Corps policeman (retired on medical grounds)
Friends: Cinnibar of Babalon (See Below) Marty, Inspector in police department and an old colleague of Kayns. Skipper Mindy. Owner of a rust bucket freighter. Pop Perz, an eccentric inventor friend of Kayn who seems to be good at helping him out of sticky situations.
Acquaintances: Jughead. Self styled lord of Netherworld, the city under New Moscow that is home to the petty criminals, the



outcasts and the exiled. Rulf of Babalon, Cinnibars big brother. Krunz the Krusher, Babalonian-human hybrid and bouncer at Jugheads place.

Enemies: Bryan Traven, director of the research city of Valhalla Nova at Thrymheim.

Equipment: Kayn typically has his glasses for obvious reasons. Usually he also has a blaster of some kind with him and his investigators licence. He also has an amount of currency with him. Kayn never seems particularly well off however, and if he is being used as a character this should be reflected. He quite often maintains a Starship at the local spaceport. The ship has an onboard computer with a removable memory core. Typical armament seems to be three blaster cannon. Para-Gliders are fitted for atmospheric escape.

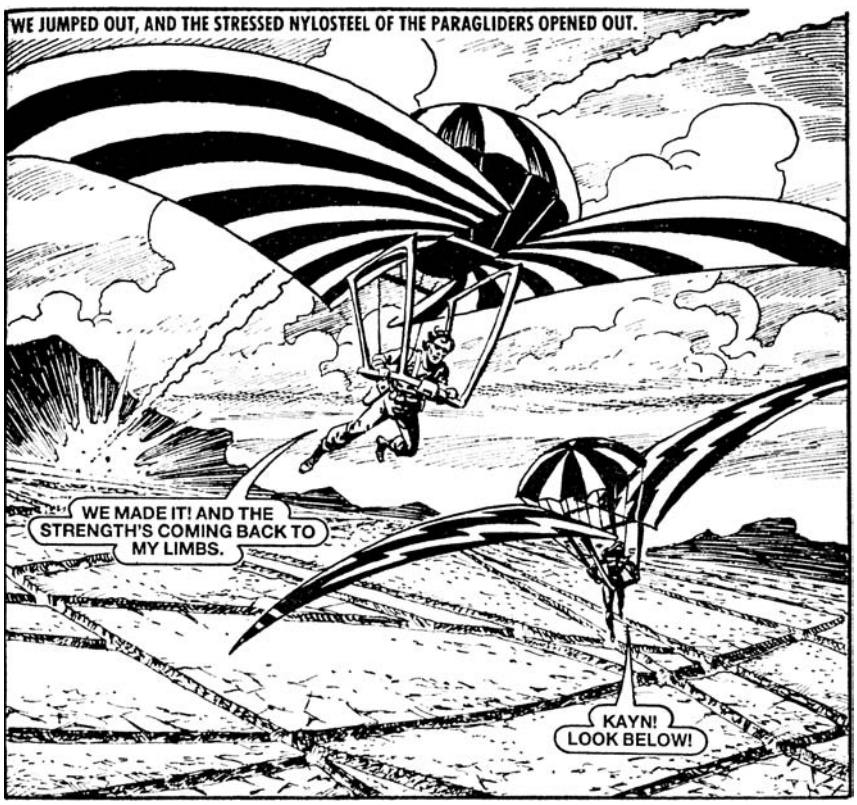
Mikal R Kayn is one of ***Starblazer***'s longest running characters first appearing in issue number 45, ***Operation Overkill***. While he is only known as "Kayn" there, and none of his background like his accident is explored, it is obviously the same character as there are a number of references. Kayn is a fully licenced private detective who seems to largely base himself from New Moscow on Earth.

Past Occupation

Kayn was originally part of the Star Corps, a galaxy spanning police force. Kayn was sent to the desolate ice world of Thrymhein to arrest Bryan Traven, the director of the research city, Valhalla Nova on corruption charges. Work there had caused adverse affects on the workers and Traven had become desperate (It's never revealed exactly what Valhalla Nova was working on, and whether Traven was following orders from the city's owners or doing independent research). Kayn, along with officers Affa, Snow and Dyke attempted to arrest Traven, but he resisted by firing at the officers. Traven was apparently killed when Kayn shot him, causing him to fall into an anti-energy generator. However the generator then exploded burning out his retinas meaning he could only see unaided in the infra-red spectrum. With the aid of special glasses, Kayn can see normally, however, this accident spelled the end of his career in the Space Corps. It apparently also exempted him from participating in the war against the Harohin warlords. Whether this was due to a desire to join up with the forces and being refused, or it meant that Kayn was exempt from a draft is unknown.

Present

Kayn is a fully licensed private investigator. He seems to be proficient in the use of blasters and other personal energy weapons. However, he rarely, if ever uses larger weapons like rifles. This may be due to a personal preference, a restriction on weapons (likely), or a holdover from his Star Corps days when a service sidearm would be pistol sized (Also likely). Kayn has also owned his own Starship. Typically larger than a fighter, it would be fair to say it is about the size of a scout ship and can comfortably seat up to 4 people. Kayn's ships are usually armed, again, this may be allowed due to his PI Licence. Kayn is quite good at flying his Starship, for example he performed some dangerous maneuvers round the old abandoned Ithaca Starport when he was pursued by robotic drones and used a trick of skimming the atmosphere to burn them up indicating that he is a decent pilot and able to think quickly.


WE JUMPED OUT, AND THE STRESSED NYLOSTEEL OF THE PARAGLIDERS OPENED OUT.
WE MADE IT! AND THE STRENGTH'S COMING BACK TO MY LIMBS.
KAYN! LOOK BELOW!

Kayn does seem to sometimes bring out the worst in people however. While he is friendly with some policemen from his Star Corps days, others are not afraid to show that they dislike him and his methods. Perhaps this is because of the normal police suspicion of Private Investigators. Another reason is that Kayn typically will use any means to solve a case even if it is a bit foolhardy.

Organisation: The Star Corps

The Star Corps apparently are the interstellar police force in the Kayn universe. Much like the present day FBI, the Star Corps have overall jurisdiction, but they do not seem to be as restricted as the FBI. They still liaise with local police forces.

They seem able to draw on considerable levels of equipment and personnel when needed.

Cinnibar

"Go. I am no puny Earth Woman."
– Cinnibar to Kayn – ***The Midas Mystery***.

Age: Estimated late 20's, to mid 30's
Hair Colour: Blonde
Height: About 6 foot 3 – to 6 foot 5 inches
Distinguishing features: Three distinctive 'tribal' style tattoos (unknown if this is permanent, presumably so as you never see Cinnibar without them). These are situated on Cinnibar's cheeks, and are in the form of three vertical 'stripes'. Extremely long hair, unusual in a female warrior as it would be presumed it could cause trouble in hand to hand combat, for example an opponent could grab hold of it (or at least try in Cinnibar's case). She is also quite tall and slender.
Occupation: Babalonian Warrioress, later ***Starblazer*** issues give her the title of 'Lady Cinnibar' suggesting she has some standing within the upper echelons of Babalonian society, although this could just be a term of politeness. Saying that, she was present in a meeting of the so called 'First Families' in the city of Bazwun in one of the solo Cinnibar issues. These "First Families" seem to be a form of feudal council consisting of the most important families on Babalon, so the title of "Lady" may be an honourific.
Friends: Mikal R Kayn, private detective she met on the ice planet of Thrymheim when Kayn was hunting down Bryan Traven. Traven's base was the research city of Valhalla Nova, the territory of the Vendigo, a savage creature that Cinnibar hunted. Rulf, Cinnibar's older brother. She regards him as a bit overprotective at times, and also a little bit childlike. Rulf, like Cinnibar is an accomplished warrior, though Rulf perhaps relies more on brute force where Cinnibar is more elegant in her fighting style.
Acquaintances: Skipper Mindy, captain of a dilapidated earth freighter, a mutual contact through Kayn. Krunz, a Bablonian-human hybrid. Various Babalonian nobles. The Wulfral, noble ruler of Babalon, Cinnibar does not like him much since he became more influenced by outside ideas, though this dislike does not extend far enough to be classed as an enemy, despite him exiling Cinnibar and Rulf from Babalon.
Enemies: Quite a few, mainly related to Kayn and his cases. Bo Kretch, human slaver, Vivanna, her ambitious and immoral cousin. Drifters, a bunch of renegades and bandits on Babalon
Racial Trait: This is just an opinion from Kayn, but he once remarked that "The Hunters of Babalon had developed techniques for killing just about anything that moved". This suggests some sort of racial bonus to combat skills, or at least some of them. Perhaps the ability to perform a critical strike or an enhanced chance of doing so.
Equipment: Cinnibar never seems to go anywhere without a sword, or sometimes, two smaller swords. Also, on occasion she will carry an energy weapon, sometimes a blaster pistol, or more rarely a rifle. She usually also wears traditional Babalonian clothing, usually integrating some sort of armour.

Cinnibar the warrior is first introduced in the Starblazer issue ***Death Reaper***. There she is a rather mysterious character with only a halting command of standard language. She offers to guide Kayn to the research city of Valhalla Nova as part of his mission to find Bryan Traven, the former director of the city, as no-one else would take him there. Cinnibar reveals that she has a fear, probably of Traven who kills by touch as he consists of anti-energy. This admission is unusual for a Babalonian warrior as they are generally regarded as near fearless and is one of the first signs of trust between her and Kayn. She guides Kayn to

the city, but, initially, will not enter. When Kayn runs into trouble, Cinnibar rescues him. She regards Kayn putting her fear to rest as a kind of debt, a debt which eventually grows into friendship.

After Valhalla Nova

After Valhalla Nova, it seems that Cinnibar spent more time becoming less of a recluse, as of the time of the issue ***Mind Bender***, she had become a bit more articulate with a far better command of the language. Although at that time she was not able to help Kayn, she sent Rulf, her older brother along, unannounced and much to Kayn's surprise. Cinnibar would play an instrumental part in the Midas Mystery case, started by Kayn where Galactic millionaires seemed to be acting irrationally. Due to her contact with Kayn, Cinnibar becomes more worldly wise.

Present

Cinnibar is now an experienced and highly regarded warrior.

One of Cinnibar's main drawbacks is her insistence on using melee weapons as much as possible. This seems to be a cultural trait peculiar to Babalonians,

part tradition, part honour-code. However, she will occasionally relent to using ranged weapons but seems to much prefer traditional weapons.

Cinnibar seems to be familiar with a wide variety of fighting styles, sometimes employing a single large bladed weapon, or sometimes two smaller ones, usually of equal length rather than the katana/ wakizashi style combination sometimes featured in some fiction. She never seems to use a shield, as it would seem to be unsuited to her fast and agile styles of combat. Also, she tends not to use two handed weapons or blunt weapons like maces, or even larger slower bladed weapons like axes.

Cinnibar seems to pick up on at least the basics of unfamiliar technology fairly quickly, however she doesn't seem overly comfortable with some aspects of it, especially on Babalon itself where there is more outside influence changing the traditional way of life.

Cinnibar is far from diplomatic and can have a blunt outlook on life. She is not above sharing her opinions, no matter how unpopular. This once caused her to be exiled from Babalon.

Cinnibar's liking for combat sometimes frustrates Kayn, who would prefer to make a tactical retreat when possible, although it has to be said she never knowingly recklessly endangers her companions.

As seen on Thryheim, Cinnibar has been known to tame wild beasts to use as pack animals. She is a proficient hunter in most environments, especially wild environments.

Rulf

Age: Estimated early to late 30's

Hair Colour: Bald

Height: About 6 foot 4 – to 6 foot 6 inches

Distinguishing features: An intricate tribal style tattoo pattern all over Rulfs head and upper torso (You never see any more). No hair on head or chest, it is not known if this is natural or if it is shaved. Rulf also often does not wear a tunic or torso armour. Often called "Little Rulf" by Cinnibar!!

Occupation: Babalonian Warrior, also part of one of the "First Families", so probably has some sort of honourific title, although it is never mentioned.

Friends: Mikal R Kayn, private detective he met while Kayn was on the "Mind Bender" case, pursuing the last of the Harohin Warlords. Cinnibar, his younger sister who he can be overprotective of, despite her being perfectly able to take care of herself, he feels it is a 'duty' to look after kin.

Acquaintances: Skipper Mindy, captain of a dilapidated earth freighter, a mutual contact through Kayn. Krunz, a Bablonian-human hybrid. Various Babalonian nobles. The Wulfral, noble ruler of Babalon who exiles both himself and Cinnibar from Babalon,

Enemies: In ***Mind Bender*** it is obvious that Rulf had heard of the Harohin, and he regarded them as the "scum of the galaxy". Whether this was through reputation or he had encountered them before is unknown. Bo Kretch, human slaver, who kidnapped Cinnibar. Vivanna,his cousin. Drifters, a bunch of renegades and bandits on Babalon

Racial Trait: This is just an opinion from Kayn, but he once remarked that "The Hunters of Babalon had developed techniques for killing just about anything that moved". This suggests some sort of racial bonus to combat skills, or at least some of them. Perhaps the ability to perform a critical strike or an enhanced chance of doing so.

Equipment: Rulf's preferred weapon appears to be the axe, or occasionally the warhammer. He fights in a totally different style from his sister. Occasionally he will also carry an energy weapon of pistol size, and one or two minor pieces of equipment like communications links.

Contradiction: Between the ***Starblazer*** issues with Kayn, and her own issues, there seems to be a contradiction. It is assumed that Babalonians are alien, although humanoid. They are significantly taller than humans and have a vastly different culture. Later solo Cinnibar issues suggest that Babalon was colonized by a colony ship from Earth.

Rulf is first introduced in ***Mind Bender*** and later in ***Nether World*** along with Krunz the Babalonian hybrid. As Cinnibar cannot be there in time to assist Kayn, Rulf is sent in her stead. From the beginning it is obvious that Rulf is a bit more bluff, less subtle and perhaps a bit slower than Cinnibar. Cinnibar despite her unfamiliarity is quite intelligent and Rulf seems to be a little slow.

After Mind Bender

After ***Mind Bender***, Rulf is not really seen until the Cinnibar spin off issues. When Cinnibar is kidnapped

by the human slaver Bo Kretch, Rulf is left for dead. Despite this, he feels it is his duty to try and rescue Cinnibar. After a run in at the local spaceport, he purchases a clapped out freighter, and tries to find Cinnibar.

Rulf however, is no Starship pilot and has to accept the services of an old astrodroid which has not flown a ship for some years. Finally finding Kretch's asteroid base, Rulf rescues Cinnibar indirectly by losing his temper with the ship and colliding with Kretchs vessel causing it to spin into a rocky outcropping and explode.

Present

Rulf is an experienced and highly regarded warrior.

Like Cinnibar, Rulf seems to insist on using archaic melee weapons even in a situation where it might be regarded as unsuitable. However, Rulf's combat experience usually wins out in the end.

Rulf's fighting style could not be more of a contrast to Cinnibar's. While Cinnibar employs a fast and elegant, almost graceful fighting style, Rulf seems slow, clumsy and ponderous in comparison, though this is misleading as Rulf's reflexes are impressive. Together, both Rulf and Cinnibars combat styles complement each other, confusing opponents who try, usually in vain to find a gap in their defences. Rulf seems to favour heavier weapons like large long handled axes, warhammers, and presumably broadswords, although he is never seen using a sword.

Rulf seems to be a bit more comfortable with new technology than Cinnibar, having for instance become quite comfortable when using an armoured fighting vehicle on Babalon, sometimes though his native instincts kick in and he reverts to his older styles. If anything, it can be said that Cinnibar picks up on new technology faster, but Rulf is more comfortable in the long term actually using it.

Rulf seems to have a slightly easy outlook on life sometimes. For instance when Cinnibar was defying the Wulfrals ban on honour duels, she had to encourage him (by elbowing him in the stomach no less) to support her. Rulf's attitude seems to be more what is okay for an easy life. However, when he gets his mind on something he is hard to persuade from his course, for instance when rescuing Cinnibar from Bo Kretch.

Rulf has a family orientated view on life, valuing it above almost everything else. When family is in danger, Rulf feels that takes precedence, however, Cinnibar sometimes finds Rulf's concern a bit smothering.

Rulf can be distracted sometimes, for instance almost being entranced with his Cousin Vivanna's beauty.

Rulf can be a bit rash at times, taking on a Harohin warlord with an axe isn't exactly a wise move after all.

The Suicide Squad

Steven Martin

Age: Estimated early 30's
Hair Colour: Blonde
Height: About 5 foot 11 inches
Distinguishing features: None
Occupation: Space Force Lieutenant, Squad Leader
Friends: Few friends, Gunner Gee, Navigator Henry, Vidop Bello.
Acquaintances: The Commander, mysterious figure in Earth general staff. He seems to find the dangerous missions to send the squad on. His seeming indifference to casualties earns the resentment of the members of the squad especially from Lieutenant Martin.
Enemies: Asur Megatroops, the Shabot, Bargez and the Choth. Also, the 'General', another mysterious figure who is the political opponent of the Commander and arrests the squad on charges of treason and desertion in an effort to humiliate and discredit the Commander.
Equipment: Martin has no fixed equipment. Usually he will have a sidearm, but even that will vary depending on the situation at hand.

Lieutenant Steven Martin (called Steven Terry in Issue 49-Rigel Express and the first few pages of issue 75-Doomrock risked his life and disobeyed orders to save troops under fire. He succeeded but his military career was effectively over after being charged with insubordination and disobeying direct orders. Martin languished in a desk job at Earth until the vicious Asur Megatroops launched offensives into Earth space. Martin was recalled to duty and given a command crew consisting of Gunner Gee, Navigator Henry and Vidop Bello. He also had 100 Space Marines, in reality, volunteers from military prisons. Martin's mission was to hold a space observatory against an Asur attack, which failed. Martin took the offensive,

capturing an Asur scout ship, the Voltor, and managed to use captured enemy codes to infiltrate enemy defences, capturing an Asur admiral in the process.

Using the Voltor, the squad managed to destroy a giant Asur spaceborne arsenal on the fringes of the solar system.

The following mission against the Shabot resulted in the death of Bello. Following missions had an increasing disenchantment with the various war efforts that Earth was engaging in.

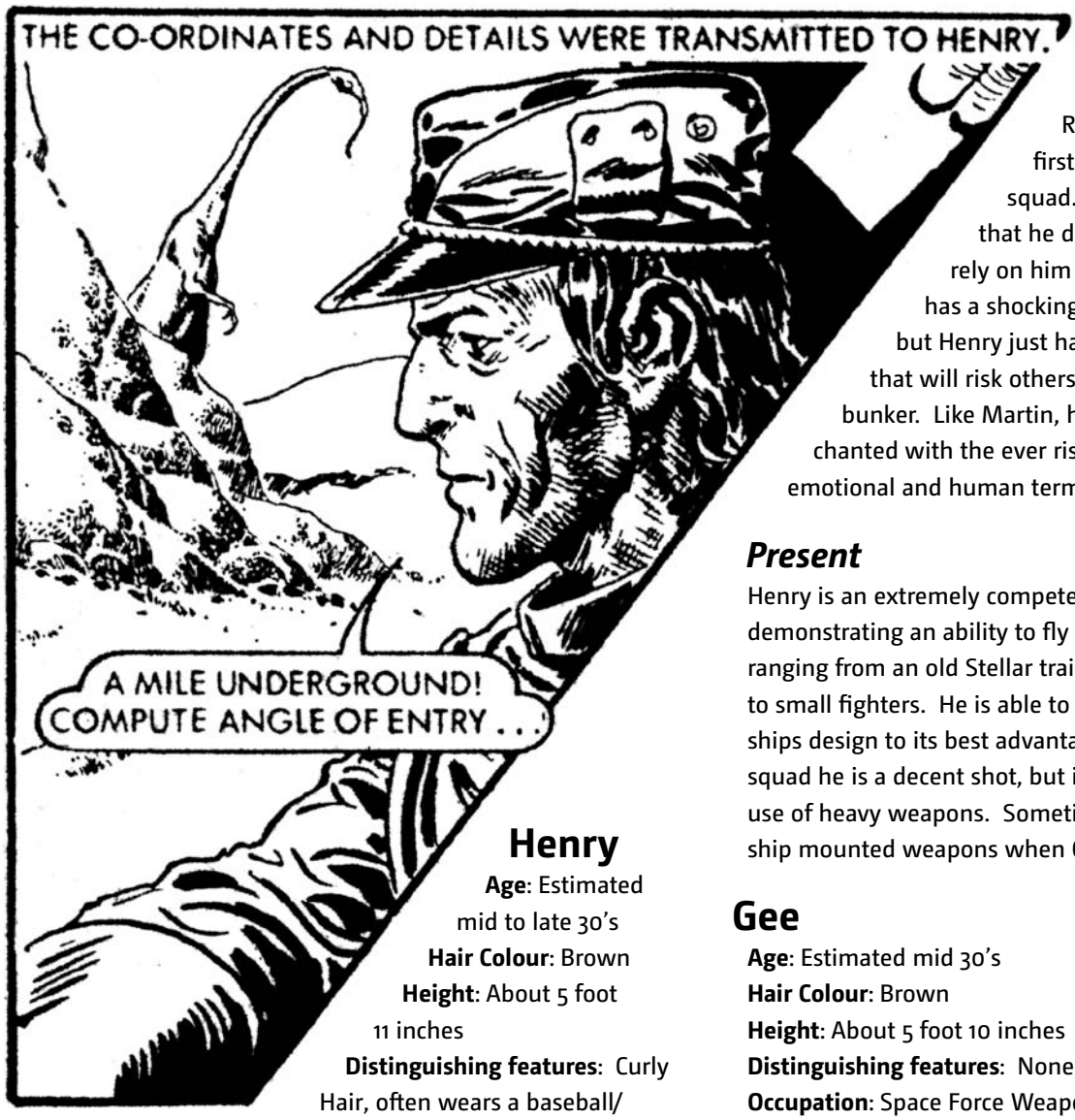
Present

Martin being a commissioned officer is a competent leader. The fact that he is willing to lead from the front rather than constantly delegate earns him the respect of his men.

He is able to devise a plan quickly to get his squad out of a sticky situation. Martin is also a proficient pilot in the use of various armoured ground vehicles, able to grasp alien technology fairly quickly as well.

Martin is a good shot with a wide variety of ranged weapons, he is also able to use explosives and rig various booby traps, though he prefers to leave that sort of thing to Gee who has a better understanding and specializes in that sort of thing.

Martin unfortunately seems to have a rather 'doom and gloom' attitude which potentially can affect those around him.



Henry

Age: Estimated mid to late 30's
Hair Colour: Brown
Height: About 5 foot 11 inches
Distinguishing features: Curly Hair, often wears a baseball/ forage cap
Occupation: Space Force Navigator, Pilot
Friends: Gunner Gee, Lt Martin Vidop Bello.
Acquaintances: The Commander, mysterious figure in Earth general staff. He seems to find the dangerous missions to send the squad on. His seeming indifference to casualties earns the resentment of the members of the squad especially from Lieutenant Martin.
Enemies: Asur Megatroops, the Shabot, Bargez and the Choth. Also, the 'General', another mysterious figure who is the political opponent of the Commander and arrests the squad on charges of treason and desertion in an effort to humiliate and discredit the Commander.
Equipment: Henry has no fixed equipment. Usually he will have a sidearm, but even that will vary depending on the situation at hand.

Navigator Henry is the pilot of the Rigel Express in the first appearance of the squad. Martin comments that he doesn't know if he can rely on him as Henry apparently has a shocking disciplinary record, but Henry just has no time for officers that will risk others lives while hiding in a bunker. Like Martin, he too becomes disenchanted with the ever rising cost of war, both in emotional and human terms.

Present

Henry is an extremely competent pilot and navigator demonstrating an ability to fly almost any type of ship ranging from an old Stellar train to an Asur scoutcraft to small fighters. He is able to use all aspects of a ships design to its best advantage. Like the rest of the squad he is a decent shot, but is also good with the use of heavy weapons. Sometimes being able to use ship mounted weapons when Gee is not available.

Gee

Age: Estimated mid 30's
Hair Colour: Brown
Height: About 5 foot 10 inches
Distinguishing features: None
Occupation: Space Force Weapons technician, Starship gunner
Friends: Few friends, Lt Steven Martin, Navigator Henry, Vidop Bello.
Acquaintances: The Commander, mysterious figure in Earth general staff. He seems to find the dangerous missions to send the squad on. His seeming indifference to casualties earns the resentment of the members of the squad especially from Lieutenant Martin.
Enemies: Asur Megatroops, the Shabot, Bargez and the Choth. Also, the 'General', another mysterious figure who is the political opponent of the Commander and arrests the squad on charges of treason and desertion in an effort to humiliate and discredit the Commander.
Equipment: Gee will generally have a smaller weapon on his person, and maybe one or two pieces of equipment that he has devised.

Gunner Gee is assigned to the Rigel Express as part of her crew and is a self proclaimed weapons specialist. Gee is able to devise ingenious weapons 'on the fly'. He is usually stationed at the weapons console on any Starship they are in. Gee like the others rapidly becomes sick of war, especially when Gee suffers the indignity of being branded a traitor after a particularly vicious round of interrogation by the Choth involving physical torture and large doses of M-90, a potent truth drug. Combined with a dangerous dose of radiation sickness which was treated, seemingly for him just to be executed in a few days.

Present

Gee is able to devise a variety of ingenious weapons 'on the fly'. Obviously the level of complexity of these weapons are dependent on resources available and time limitations.

Gee is also able to comfortably use alien weapons technology with a very short period of familiarisation.

Gee is perhaps the most hot headed of the team, undoubtedly a brave enough individual he can be a bit foolhardy. He seems to try and make light of some bad situations.

Bello

Age: Estimated late 30's – early 40's
Hair Colour: Blonde
Height: About 5 foot 10 inches
Distinguishing features: Heavy beard
Occupation: Space Force Computer and communications officer
Friends: Few friends, Lt Steven Martin, Navigator Henry, Gunner Gee.
Acquaintances: The Commander, mysterious figure in Earth general staff., always finding the dangerous missions to send the squad on. His seeming indifference to casualties earns the resentment of the squad members, especially from Lieutenant Martin. While Bello's death in issue 75 ***Doomrock*** is a focus for the resentment the squad feel against the commander, Bello is the son of the Commander, a fact that remains hidden for some time.
Enemies: Asur Megatroops, the Shabot, Bargez and the Choth. Also, the 'General', another mysterious figure who is the political opponent of the Commander and arrests the squad on charges of treason and desertion in an effort to humiliate and discredit the Commander.

Equipment: Bello would probably have a sidearm as well as some portable computer equipment. Other gear relevant to his profession would be stowed on the ship they have been assigned or on base..

Bello is a quiet individual, not as outspoken as Henry or Gee. His title of Vidop speaks of a job that is combination computer operator/specialist, and communications specialist. Bello in addition to the basics of this would be involved in some basic cryptography. Not the more espionage related types, but the style that would be able to fake ship ID's, hack computer networks and so on. Bello quickly became part of the team, but his time with them was cut short when the squad had to destroy a Shabot asteroid fortification. While on space bikes, Bello's suit was hit by enemy fire. Critically injured and fast losing what little air he had left, Bello aimed his bike for an exhaust port, causing a massive explosion in the structure. The team returned and reported a completed mission but the loss of Bello embittered Martin and the rest of the team.

Bello's Skills

Bello was able to pilot small craft fairly competently, smaller vehicles like the Shabot space bike were no problem for him.

He was also a fair shot, above what could be classed as basic accuracy levels.

Bello's background, being the son of the Commander was one of the main story elements in the Suicide Squad issues, as Bello's death caused such a backlash against the military structure that the squad served. Each further conflict made the futility of war seem more pronounced. Bello would seem to have possibly had influence but obviously never used it to get transferred away from combat. Why he never revealed his family connections to the rest of the squad is a mystery.

As the computer expert of the squad, Bello would have been an expert at various computer encryption routines, as well as countering security measures.

Bello would also find communications part of his duties, both handling internal Starship communications, and relaying and receiving messages to and from command, as well as anaylsing and decrypting enemy comms traffic. This sort of job would require a high level of expertise.

Hadron Halley

"You may be a brilliant scientist, but you're no match for a Fighting Scientist."

– Hadron Halley – ***The Warlord of Laama***.

Age: Estimated late 20's
Hair Colour: Blonde
Height: About 5 foot 11 inches
Distinguishing features: Usually wears a Fi-Sci jumpsuit with black trim.
Occupation: Fighting Scientist
Friends: General Larz Pluto of Galac-Squad, has taken up various roles including theatre and sector commanders.
Acquaintances: Numerous acquaintances through his work.
Enemies: Many, including Baron Tarb, usurper of Arenal, Leonotus, infamous scientist, Grand Marshal Ottodruze, the Mease, the Warlord of Laama, renegade Sergeant Bruville of the Baryon planet expedition and many others.
Equipment: Halley rarely carries a fixed set of 'issue' equipment as a Fi-Sci's missions can vary wildly. It can be assumed that a sidearm will be generally carried and most likely some form of communications equipment. Other equipment will depend on the mission at hand and will be issued by the Fi-Sci organization or Galac Squad.

Hadron Halley is one of the earliest of the recurring characters in ***Starblazer***, his first issue was number 50 ***Moonsplitter***. This also introduced the concept of the Fighting Scientists, Galac Squad and the secondary character of General Larz Pluto. The way General Larz was introduced was when he was captured by a force of Mease, an alien race hostile to Earth. Halley was sent in on his own to rescue him as it was ascertained that a Fi-Sci on his own had a greater chance than a force of Galac-Squad operatives.

Experience

Halley has been on a diverse range of missions for Galac-Squad from rescueing General Pluto from the Mease, to setting up a terraforming operation on a desolate planet to enable Galac Squad to operate a base in a pirate heavy area. Halley's wide range of skills and experience serve him well throughout many missions. Sometimes Halley operates alone,

other times as part of a larger Fi-Sci operation or sometimes attached to a Galac-Squad taskforce. It is never made clear what official rank, if any he holds, but his position does allow him leeway in requisitioning items, though this is usually at the discretion of General Pluto.

Present

Since Fi-Sci operatives are intended to be able to operate alone, typical Fi-Sci's have a wide range of survival, military and scientific skills. Halley typically has access to a ship of some kind, though Fi-Sci seem to retain their own stockpile of vessels. The type Halley typically flies is a Scoutship, a short, stubby and it must be said not very aerodynamic looking craft, it is nonetheless well designed, sturdy and reliable. These ships can comfortable seat up to about 10 people in relative comfort for an extended period of time and are usually hyperspace capable. Armament is not overly heavy, but respectable, especially for a ship of it's size. It is also capable of deploying a smallish 'bubble' turret outside the vessels main forcefield as seen in the issue ***The Torturer of Triton II***. This allows the ship to fire outside its frontal arc without having to lower force fields and endangering the ship.

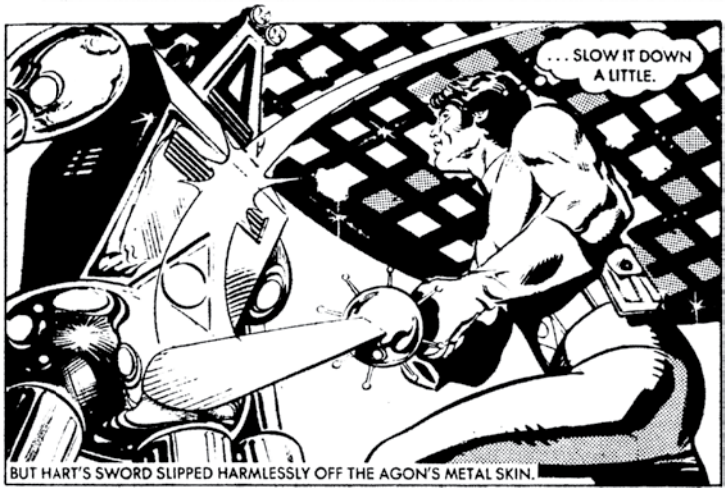
Halley can devise all sorts of equipment, though the time this takes can vary depending on mission pressures.

Hadron is a proficient star pilot, able to pilot Fi-Sci craft with a high degree of skill, he can also modify existing craft to be far more capable than they were.

Hadron will rarely order others to do something that he is not willing to do himself, this can inspire those around him.

Hadron has a certain reputation, partially from his own exploits, but also because Fi-Sci itself is regarded as an elite organization.

Hadron has undergone intense survival training, probably as part of a Galac-Squad training programme. This will ensure that he is able to survive in almost any hostile environment.



Matt Tallis

Age: Estimated mid 30's
Hair Colour: Blonde
Height: About 5 foot 11 inches
Distinguishing features: None.
Occupation: United Planets Security Service Agent, later unlimited agent.
Friends: Very few friends especially after the destruction of his home planet. He does have a robot/computer hybrid which controls his ship the Taurus, it is named ISAK.
Acquaintances: Numerous acquaintances through his work, mostly involving planetary law enforcement officials. The chief who he initially reports to.
Enemies: The Group of Three, three men who destroyed Tallis's home world. The Megaloi, giant ancient robots who desire conquest of the galaxy and to destroy that which is 'imperfect'. The Autarchs and the Free Spacers, groups involved in the assassination of upper echelons of the Galactic elite through the distribution of the anti-aging drug Athanatine.

Matt Tallis comes from a human colony with a heavier gravity. In an 'earth normal' environment he is three times stronger than the norm. Tallis has his homeworld destroyed by the group of three.

The Athanatine Case

Tallis has his first case in ***Starblazers*** tracking down the distributors of Athanatine, a drug which retards the aging process, however, the galaxies elite, who are the only ones who can afford it are dying off. Finding the area where it comes from, Tallis comes into contact with the League of Free Spacers, a fancy name for a group of smugglers and pirates. This group are working for the Autarchs, a group of bio-engineered humans who survived the crash of their colony ship hundreds of years before.

Tallis manages to destroy the Autarchs and their base of operations.

The Group of Three

Tallis's home planet is destroyed by a private gunship operated by the Group of Three. The reason for this was that the core of the planet was transuranic ore, far more valuable than gold. Tallis tracks down and kills two of the members and imprisons another. At this point he is promoted to unlimited agent meaning that he does not have to report back to his chief after each mission.

The Megaloi

Tallis sees a recording showing an unidentified battle-world destroying a mineral convoy. Chasing up his lead leads him to an encounter with the Megaloi, centuries old robots who are obviously insane. Their original directive was to help those were classed as backward but the directive got twisted to exterminate those who the Megaloi decided were imperfect. The Megaloi killed their creators and set the Battleworld on a course of destruction.

With the help of a hologram of one of the original creators, Tallis is able to destroy the Battleworld.

Present

Tallis is an accomplished pilot. Even though ISAK can pilot the ship, there are times when Tallis prefers to do so.

Tallis's strength on a normal gravity world can help him out of some sticky situations, such as when he is being held prisoner and wishes to escape or in the middle of a fight.

Tallis has a telepathic link with Isak facilitated through an implant in his skull enabling him to communicate with Isak and more or less summon his ship at will.

Despite being a galactic agent and entitled to requisition a ship, Tallis has his own private cruiser, the Taurus. This unusual vessels appears to be lightly armed though we have never seen it in combat as such.

Jubal McKay (The Planet Tamer)

Age: Estimated mid 30's
Hair Colour: Blonde
Height: About 5 foot 10 inches
Distinguishing features: When he is the planet tamer he is never seen outside his armoured suit/life support system.
Occupation: Freelancer Law Enforcement/ Bounty Hunter, former United Planets Security Service Officer
Friends: Few friends as he becomes a loner after his operation, he remains friendly with Dr Karl Verringer who performed the experimental surgery on him.
Acquaintances: Numerous acquaintances through his work, mostly involving planetary law enforcement officials.
Enemies: Kapo, former criminal who was bathed with radiation that was left untreated after he was caught by the Planet Tamer.
Equipment: The Planet Tamer carries a variety of personal weapons including

- Electron Pistol, a personal sidearm.
- Inbuilt Photon Blaster
- Sunburst Bombs, these are the Planet Tamer's equivalents to Flash-Bang grenades, causing an intensely bright flash which can temporarily blind targets for a lengthy period of time.
- Metabolic Decellerator, a grenade style weapon that slows down the targets metabolism drastically.
- The Space Sled that the Planet Tamer has carries a variety of weapons, both direct energy weapons and deployable weapons. These include...
  - » Warp Torpedoes, a sled launched weapon that is highly lethal destroying most smaller ship targets.
  - » The Crippler, a weapon that can knock out the power systems of a targeted ship without harming hull integrity.
  - » The Planet Tamer also has a computer link built into his arm that interfaces with computer systems and can uplink to his sled's onboard computer.
- The Planet Tamer has built into his helmet a variety of equipment including a device that can pick up communications from a short distance, a binocular style device allowing him to observe distant events and so on.

The Planet Tamer is a truly unique individual, a self sustaining and self supporting man on his own planetary sled. The Planet Tamer is a mysterious, but in his own way, well known almost notorious figure feared among the galaxy's criminal fraternity.

His Past

The Planet Tamer was once junior law enforcement Officer Jubal McKay of the United Planets Security Service. McKay was a young officer on the trail of a notorious criminal called Trent, who had already committed numerous atrocities. Tracking down Trent, Mckay faced a dilemma. Trent had wired up hostages to a mini nuclear bomb, and he faced a choice, let Trent go and he would have a chance at freeing the hostages by defusing the bomb, or kill Trent, dooming the hostages (presumably Trent was holding a deadman switch). McKay let Trent go, and while he managed to free the hostages he was caught in the blast.

Thought dead, his body was recovered, barely hanging on to life. The whole left hand side of his body was ruined, either shattered or paralysed. Facing life in a wheelchair, McKay elected to become the subject of Dr Klaus Verringer's pioneering cybernetic surgery. This involved making him wholly self sustaining in space, and having some built in gadgets. After a visit to a custom shipbuilder, he had a space sled built to his custom specifications.

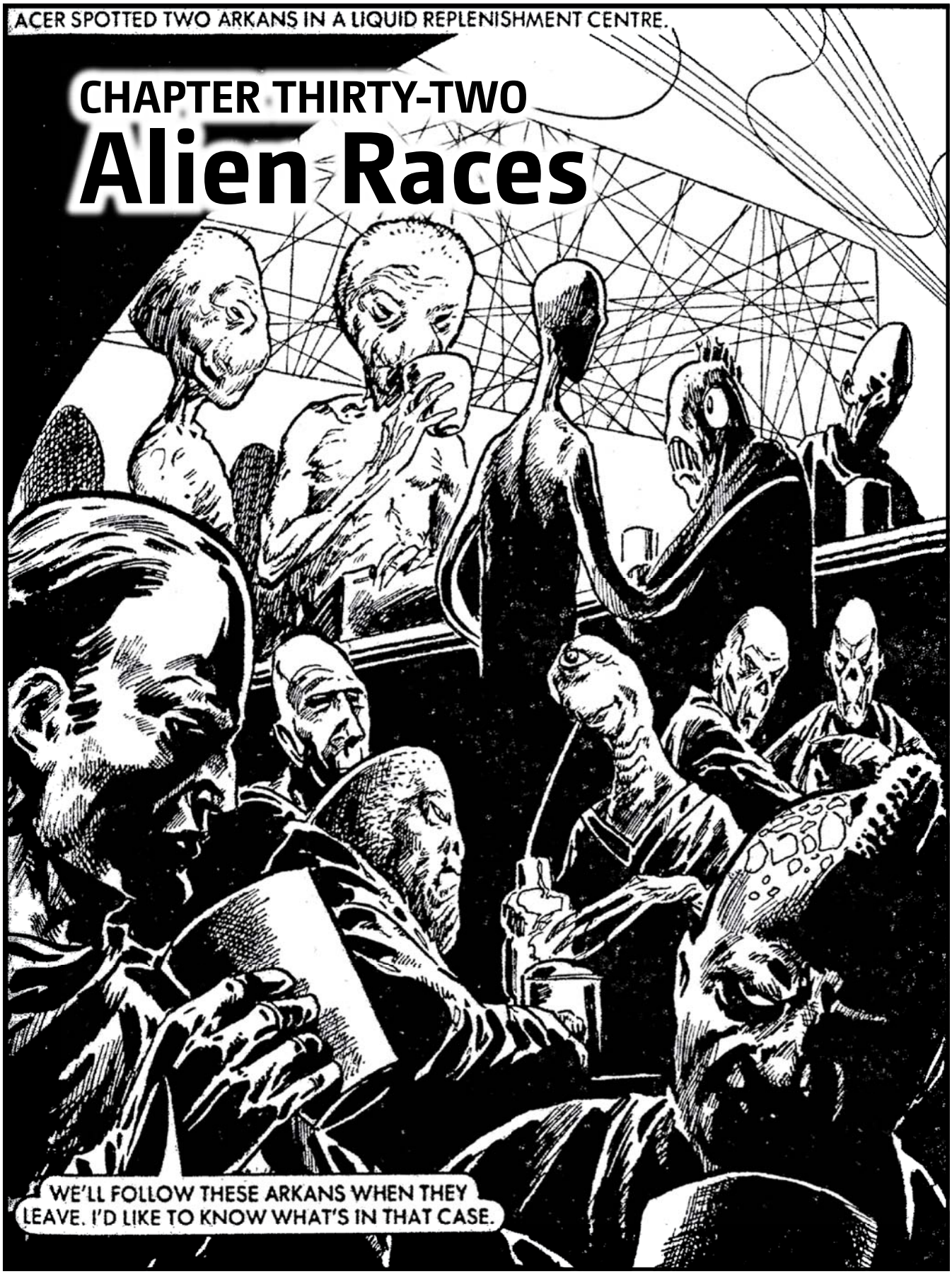
Years later, McKay managed to track down Trent and kill him in revenge.

Present

The Planet Tamer operates in deep space, calling no planet home and remains on alert at all times. It is presumed that his space sled is capable of hyperspace travel, if so, it is a small vessel to be able to do so, but there are no indications of any artificial jump gates.

While the Planet Tamer accepts payments for jobs, this does not seem to be a primary concern of his, though among those who do not know him he still has something of a mercenary reputation.

The Planet Tamers past is not known to many, very few knew that he was USPS officer and this can cause some wariness on the part of people who do not know him.

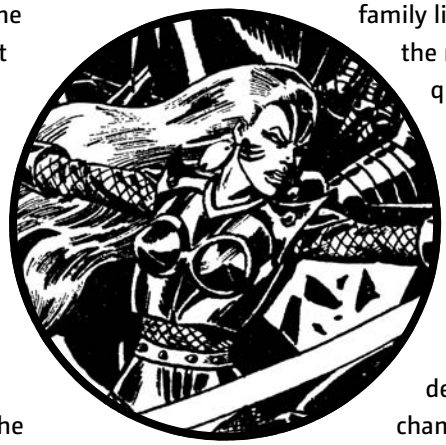

ACER SPOTTED TWO ARKANS IN A LIQUID REPLENISHMENT CENTRE.
CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO
Alien Races
WE'LL FOLLOW THESE ARKANS WHEN THEY LEAVE. I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT'S IN THAT CASE.

Alien Races

Chapter 14 dealt with creating alien races. This chapter provides some backgrounds on some of the alien races featured in the pages of Starblazer, some friendly, some decidedly not so. We have provided example Aspects for each race as a starting point to allow them to be used as player characters or notable enemies. The profiles vary in length depending on available data, and we kick off with a detailed description of the Babalonians who will feature more extensively in forthcoming supplements.

The Babalonians

Originating from the frontier planet of Babalon, the Babalonians are a race of humanoids who have recently arrived on the galactic stage. It seems that some stage in the past the planet of Babalon was settled by a colony ship from somewhere else in the universe. Although they have some similarity in appearance to humans, it is fair to say that the colony ship did not originate from Earth, or an Earth colony. The colony ship seems to have originated some thousands of years before since there is no stellar record of it, and it has become little more than a myth in Babalonian society.



The main settlement of Babalon is the city of Bazwun, which serves as the capital and seat of government. Bazwun is a large city that in recent years has expanded greatly and has enjoyed the benefits of new technology brought in by contact with the various corporations and private individuals from offworld. Bazwun now has a small, limited spaceport which will probably expand somewhat.

The main seat of government in Bazwun is the palace, a large central fortified structure. Although the already mentioned colony ship is regarded as a near myth by most Babalonians, those of the noblest blood know that the palace was originally built round part of the ship that had gradually sunk into the ground. Over the years, new construction had gradually obliterated most traces of the original ship as new structures and extensions were added on top of what was already there.

After the Drifter Rebellions in the issue 253 ***Revolt in Babalon***, the old Starship is stolen by the Lady Vivanna (covered elsewhere), and much of the old palace is either destroyed or clings to the Starship itself. After the rebellion, a new palace is built for the Wulfral, who also acquires the use of a mobile atmospheric craft.

Social Structure

The social structure of Babalon has a distinctly primitive feature. The defacto head is the Wulfral, a Babalonian term equating roughly to 'King'. There are a number of noble families holding various titles in Bablon, though the mode of address is usually Lord, or Lady in the feminine form. Each of the nobles rule a family and the most prestigious families belong to a council called "The First Families", these families or clans will presumably be the original ruling settlers of Babalon.

The ruling class is still largely patriarchal with family lines running predominately through the males, but Babalonian society seems quite open minded. There seems to be nothing unusual about women warriors for instance.

The noble classes enjoy a more privileged life. Until recently they engaged in hunting for pleasure and formalised duels. Duelling has its origins in a time when there were deep rivalries between families and champions from each would fight to settle a feud. Now it has become almost a sport with wagers being made on the outcome.

Although the families enjoy a great deal of power, ultimate power still rests with the Wulfral who has the powers of life and death, although in these more civilised times the death sentence seems to be dropped for all but the most heinous of crimes.

Ordinary citizens in Babalonian society live in a number of ways. A large portion of the population is employed in farming or basic crafts like blacksmithing. They live under a feudal system roughly equivalent to serfdom, though the peasantry are treated far more leniently than those in Earth history.

Ordinary citizens in the city of Bazwun have more freedom in their lives and generally find employment in the city itself. Beneath the ruling class are freemen and merchants. The lower classes of society often find work in the palace of Bazwun or become soldiers. The martial traditions of Babalon mean that warriors are

accorded significant status.

Rivalries

Babalonian society still has a large number of formal duels among the noble classes. This tradition stems from the days of the earliest settlements on Babalon when there were far more restrictions on access to suitable land, livestock and other necessities. It is inevitable that while some duels in this time will have remained formal with a bet placed on them, others would start to form deep seated rivalries with other families. This is the norm in a tribal or clan based society. As technology has advanced and Babalonians have settled down, the actual need for duels of this nature has lessened. However, so great is the Babalonian love for fighting and combat that often these duels are used for informal wagers, or as a way of relieving pressure, especially among bored nobles. In recent years the Wulfral has attempted to curb these duels, a move which has not been popular with many of the families and has caused resentment (reference Issue 264 ***Banished from Babalon***)

Recent Times

Until recently Babalon was a frontier planet and a fairly closed system with little to offer others. Recently various corporations have won limited trading concessions on Babalon and a few scientific research stations which have opened up the planet to a limited degree. This has brought in a raft of new technologies to the planet, including energy weapons and modern vehicles.

Personal Characteristics and traditions

Babalonians vary in height and weight, though they generally are quite well built. Unusually the women are not as a rule always shorter than the men, some, like Cinnibar are quite tall.

Babalon itself is a wild planet with a great variety of dangerous wildlife. It is, therefore, fair to assume that the earliest settlers would have struggled to survive and therefore they would have to adapt quickly. In order to survive, martial prowess became a necessary and prized skill. Later, when the settlers had come to terms with the rigours of life, deep rivalries developed between the families.

As a result, weapons training has become part and parcel of a young Babalonian's education, with even the ruling family expected to be able to hold their own. Traditional weapons for Babalonians vary, but swords, usually about the size of a longsword, are one of the most common. Other weapons used are axes and hammers, as well as polearms. Daggers are often used as backup weapons and few Babalonians, at least of noble blood go anywhere without at least one weapon of some sort about their person. Many Babalonians, particularly more conservative ones, seem to prefer these traditional weapons, though with the introduction of new technologies, some are adopting modern weapons.

With the advent of a spaceport being built at Bazwun, some Babalonians are leaving Babalon, some permanently, but many are leaving to explore the galaxy, and even more to sign on where they can display their martial skill. As a result, Babalonians are often found as part of mercenary groups, bouncers and security forces. More of these Babalonians who leave their homeworld adopt newer technologies.

Babalonians can apparently breed with other races, at least to some degree, but many 'pureblood' Babalonians hold these hybrids in some disdain. Many Babalonians also appear to have what looks like tattoos on their faces of varying designs (Cinnibar with her three 'stripes' on each cheek, Rulf with his elaborate design). What purpose these tattoos have is unknown, whether it is a family design, or something else is unknown.

Most Babalonians will stick to what they know, basically being hunters, trackers and so on. There are few Babalonian scientists on their homeworld. It's unknown what religion, if any, they have.

Suggested Aspects

So what happens if I press this button?

Babalonians aren't stupid, but they don't generally keep up with the latest technology, therefore characters who have just left their homeworld for the first time will be a bit more superstitious of technology.

Invoke: To somehow press the right button to blow things up, start the right engine or open a secret door

Compel: To press exactly the wrong button at that moment.

Ah, so THAT'S what happens.

On the other hand, Babalonians seem to be quick learners. While they might not generally master high tech equipment, they generally learn fast.

Invoke: To use a piece of alien equipment or understand how something unusual works

Compel: To misunderstand how an advanced piece of technology works

That isn't a knife. THIS is a knife.

Babalonians seem to have a fondness for bladed weapons, the larger and more intimidating, apparently, the better.

Invoke: To have a sword just when you need it or to make the sword that you have more intimidating

Compel: Pulling a blade out in the wrong places can get you in to all kinds of trouble

Come on, is that the best you've got!

Babalonians are warriors first. They generally don't like to run from a fight, preferring to meet it head on, sometimes quite literally.

Invoke: To bring out the best of their warrior side

Compel: To fight when they really should be running

Have gun will travel.

Babalonians are generally fairly curious about the galaxy, at the same time they seem to like to seek out, shall we say, the more dangerous areas of the galaxy.

Invoke: To find trouble when they were looking for it, or be ready for combat

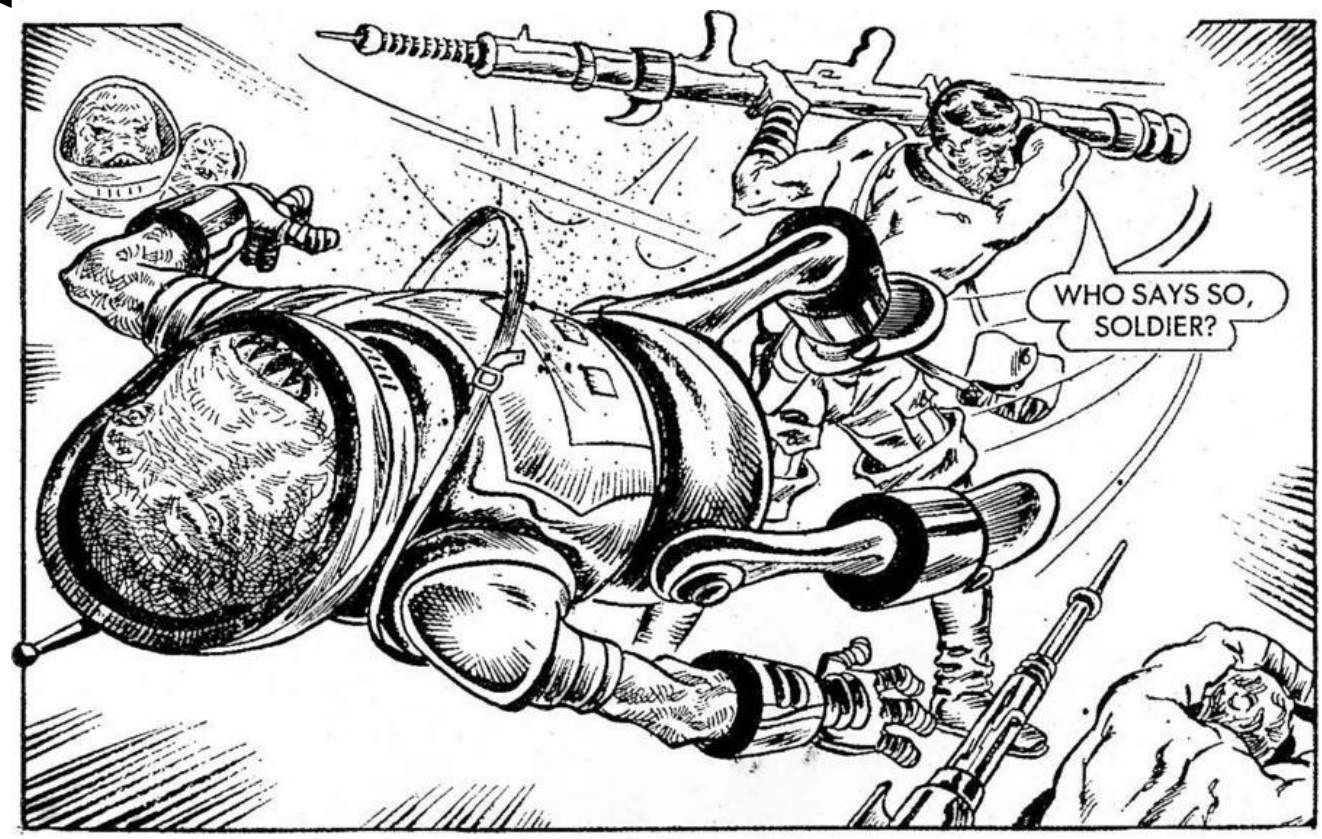
Compel: To get the character in trouble at the worst possible time

The Valk

No. 157 – Warworld

The Valk are aliens from outside our Galaxy, who have crossed the void of space from their home in Zeguma in a massive fleet of spacecraft, led by what they call their Warworld. The Valk are amphibian in appearance, with thin limbs and flat tooth-filled faces. Fragile compared to some species the Valk compensate for their weakness with heavy articulated power armour and brutality. The Valk regard all other life forms, intelligent or otherwise, as, at best, slave races, fit only to be conquered and forced to serve them. Individuals that are too weak to work are of no interest and may be killed out of hand.

Despite their resemblance to amphibians the Valk are not water breathers, and must wear the same



pressure helmets underwater as they do in space. Terran scientists surmise that the oceans of their homeworld are made of a liquid other than water, though the Valk can breath easily enough in an Oxygen atmosphere. Raw data is limited, however, since no human has crossed the Galactic void to Zeguma to find out directly.

The Valk are experts at ambush tactics, equipping their cruisers with stealth technology and tracking their targets until they are alone before attacking. When a target has been located the cruiser opens fire with an energy neutralizing ray that disables its weapons, engines and communications equipment. This ray is quickly followed by Valk commandos in boarding tubes, who blow their way through the hull and round up the crew before any resistance can be organized. Captives are stunned and knocked out, and then fitted with pain causing control circlets before they awake.

Although the Valk are not a major player in the Galaxy they are a constant danger, able to drop into the Galactic fringes from deep space without warning and launch a new invasion. Wise travellers would do well to study Valk tactics and ship recognition in case they should run into one of their cruisers in deep space.

Suggested Aspects

If you find any problem that strength and technology can't fix, you aren't applying enough.

The Valk believe their strength really is a solution for everything

Invoke: When brute strenth can help the situation

Compel: When the situation calls for a little more subtlety

Space is our home.

The Valk are much more at home in spaceships than on land

Invoke: Any space based manoeuvre, hiding, ambush, navigation.

Compel: Any non-spaced based manoeuvre, landing, invasion, dealing with land based species

From outside our Galaxy!

Their technology is strange and obscure

Invoke: High tech weapons

Compel: Unfamiliar with common knowledge and equipment (i.e. fooling them into thinking a communicator is a fission bomb)

B

Contempt for all but the Valk

Just like many others, they think they own the place

Invoke: Intimidation or for combat

Compel: To deceive an opponent who has underestimated you.

Sneak attack

They're very good at surprising foes

Invoke: To ambush

Compel: Against a Valk who is attacking directly, because they would rather have the element of surprise

Napoleon complex

Their tactics are the best, but they equally think they have nothing to learn.

Invoke: when striking quickly and decisively, or when using powered tech to compensate for their fragile bodies

Compel: to goad them into a mistake-inducing rage

The Harohin

No. 167 – Mind Bender

The Harohin were a race of hostile and autocratic aliens who engaged in a war of extermination with humanity. The Harohin were long-time warrior aristocrats who controlled an empire of subjugated species with the aid of advanced weapons technology and a limited form of telekinesis, with which they could easily turn the tide of any short range combats. Physically resembling humans, the Harohin were not physically impressive or distinctive outside their battle suits, but their mental powers and martial prowess gave them an aura of haughty arrogance that inspired fear in other races. Unfortunately for the Harohin, their aloof hostility extended to other members of their own race, and over the many centuries of their long-lived Empire the Harohin dwindled in number, having few children and many internal conflicts. Before their war the most likely cause of death amongst the Harohin was assassination at the hands of another of their race.

By the time of their war with humanity there were only a few hundred Harohin lords remaining, controlling their Empire from a single battlestation like spiders at the heart of a web. Even so humanity was hard pressed to defeat their slave races, and only decided the war with a near suicidal attack on the battlestation that wiped out all of the Harohin and almost all of the human commandos.

We say *all* with some disingenuity, of course, since many of our readers will be familiar with the story of the last Harohin, who came close to single-handedly destroying Earth some months after the war. Slethar, the last Harohin, was a single warrior who has been implanted, in the last days of the war, with a mysterious device that allowed him to gather the collected telekinetic powers of the whole Harohin race into himself. Where a normal Harohin might be able to control inanimate objects within 20 feet of himself, Slethar was able to reach from one star system to another and move objects as large as a moon or as precise as a single robot.

Although Slethar was destroyed in an atomic explosion on Shakti six months after the end of the war there remains the chance that he was not truly the last of the Harohin at all and still more are waiting to get their revenge on humanity.

Suggested Aspects

Destined to rule.

The Harohin have a destiny, whether you like it or not.

Invoke: To exert control over subject species

Compel: When trying to negotiate in any way.

A DEVICE IMPLANTED IN MY BRAIN HAS THE ENTIRE MENTAL POWER OF OUR DOOMED RACE. I WAS CHOSEN TO BE THE INSTRUMENT OF REVENGE. I CAN TRANSMIT A POWER SO GREAT THAT MACHINERY IS UNDER MY CONTROL.

Humans must serve me or die.

They see humans as anything but equals and could not comprehend of any alternative

Invoke: During any conflict or control situation involving Humans.

Compel: To ignore non-humans or not react as negativly to them.

Assassin culture.

They live and breathe killing deceptions

Invoke: when performing an assassination or related activities (i.e.stealth and ambush killing)

Compel: To help foment paranoia

***Proud nobles*.** They are born leaders

Invoke: To lead through natural charisma

Compel: when a Harohin finds something beneath him

Syrans

No. 171 – Star Knight

The Syrans are an advanced, though insular, race with a unique neutrino based metabolism. Syran life evolved in a highly unlikely location, the semi-fossilised and moon-sized skeleton of a long dead space dinosaur. Syran scientists theorize that their distant ancestors might have been symbiotic or parasitic creatures that lived in the dinosaur's intestines, though there are no fossils or similar natural processes to preserve their remains for study.

Without a fully functioning ecosystem the Syrans evolved to metabolise the neutrino radiation emitted by their sun, which precluded any need for food. They also evolved a carapace of compacted dinosaur bone, which they wear like a shell. Compared to most races the Syrans are incredibly tough and hardy, able to live in vacuum, move through molten rock, and absorb all sorts of radiation including the blasts from most energy weapons. They are also able to re-use their stored energy in the form of neutrino blasts and energy shields. As if this was not enough the Syrans also possess a formidable form of telepathy that allows them to control the mind and movements of less advanced creatures (such as humans) and even computers.

Luckily for most other races the Syrans were an intensely peaceful race, dedicated to the study of advanced science. They built curious starlight-powered Ornocraft from Syran dinosaur bones and had some peaceful contact with nearby alien races. When their sun began to fail, cutting off the supply of life-giving neutrino radiation, a few Syrans wanted to turn their powers and technology on other races in the hope of finding a new home, but most elected to enter suspended animation in the hopes of some eventual rescue.

That rescue came a million years later, after human archaeologists discovered the Syran world and removed the suspension capsules. One Syran, a renegade named Rorta, escaped and nearly managed to pierce earth's defences in a stolen spacecraft, but he was eventually defeated by a Star Knight and a number of other revived Syrans. In return the Syrans were found a new home on a recently colonized planet, and have become active members of the Terran Federation, acting mainly as peace envoys and negotiators in dangerous situations.

SYRANS LIVED BY ABSORBING NEUTRINOS FROM THEIR SUN. AS IT WAS DYING SO WERE THEY. RORTA, LEADER OF THE SYRAN MILITIA, SAW HIS CHANCE TO DEFEAT THE PEACE-MINDED COUNCIL LED BY TORQUE.
WE MUST SURVIVE AT THE EXPENSE OF OUR PEACEFUL TRADITIONS! WE MUST SEND OUT A FLEET TO CONQUER A PLANET.
NO! OUR TECHNOLOGY WILL HOLD OUR RACE IN SUSPENSION UNTIL THE TIME COMES FOR US TO RISE AGAIN.

Suggested Aspects

Non-violent, to a point.

They will try all avenues for a peaceful resolution

Invoke: To help when negotiating

Compel: To make them decide that an Ion blast is more effective in a given situation

Ancient Powers

Syran powers may be a relic of a distant age when they were more than just a peaceful culture

Invoke: When using an energy or psionic based special ability or to allow a psionic Skill to be used against a machine

Compel: To force a Syran to use a special ability against an innocent

Hardy Souls.

The Syrans can absorb dangerous radiations and extreme heat or endure the extreme cold of vacuum.

Invoke: To survive in extreme heat radiation or vacuum

Compel: To be weakened by lack of contact with radiation or heat

ON THAT VERY PLANET, AT THAT VERY MOMENT ANDROMORPH FORCES WERE BEING LOADED INTO A STARFRIGATE.
IF YOUR ARMY IS SUCCESSFUL ON IDAS, CELAINO, IT SHOULD WIPE OUT SOME OF THE DISHONOUR BY YOUR BROTHER, CRIOS.
ANDROMORPHS HAVE NO BROTHERS, OVERLORD JORJEO — WE WERE SIMPLY BRED FROM THE SAME CELL-MATRIX.

Andromorphs

No. 172 – Nightraider

A product of human science gone wrong, the Andromorphs were a race genetically engineered to operate in dangerous environments where humans couldn't go. Bred from altered human stock they were made highly resistant to radiation, mutagens and all forms of toxic chemicals. Physically Andromorphs generally resemble a cross between human and reptile, with thick scaled skin, powerful muscular shoulders, and broad hairless heads with toothy mouths and small snub noses. By altering the cellular matrix from which they are bred, however, a great degree of variation is possible, to make each Andromorph suit its intended environment.

Despite their adaptations, death rates amongst Andromorph workers were high and many people quickly became uncomfortable with the situation. While a minority of humans felt the Andromorphs were being abused, the Terran government of the time worried about rebellion amongst the workers, and the danger that an Andromorph uprising might pose. A hasty government decision to recall the Andromorphs for what was euphemistically called 'recycling' led to public outrage over the thought of state sanctioned mass murder, but just as many earthlings were distrustful or openly hostile towards the 'muties'.

The Andromorph workers were quickly replaced with newly developed robot workers and exiled from Earth space, classified as neither humans nor aliens. Made all at once a second-class species across the Galaxy, and conditioned from birth to obey orders, newly freed Andromorphs quickly fell prey to slaver races and criminal gangs, especially the Kratos drug syndicate. Public opinion on Earth also turned firmly against them, with Andromorphs viewed with revulsion by many.

In such an environment it was perhaps inevitable that the Andromorphs would stage a military action against humanity, and so they did, with the aid of the Kratos gang, who turned out to be controlled by Andromorphs. Andromorph soldiers were bred on a vast scale off earth and launched against colony planets. Things could have gone very badly for

humanity, faced with such an adaptable and fanatic foe, if an Andromorph named Crios had not betrayed his people, and ultimately sacrificed himself, in the hope of winning human status for them all.

In the aftermath of the conflict Crios' story has become more widely known and the status of Andromorphs in human society has begun, gradually, to improve. Andromorphs are now allowed on Earth again, even if they are treated more like aliens than they are people. The situation is fragile, however, with many Andromorphs still enslaved far from Earth, or working on the wrong side of the law, and it is likely to be some time yet before they truly have a proper place in the Galaxy.

Suggested Aspects

Born to be bad.

They just can't help themselves!
Invoke: When doing some criminal activity
Compel: To cause them to take the easy/criminal way of doing something

Not Quite Human.

Their genetic makeup makes them somewhat different to humans, but also sets them apart.
Invoke: To do something a human couldn't or react differently.
Compel: To have difficulty when dealing with true humans.

Remember Crios.

Crios is a powerful icon to all Andromorphs
Invoke: To assist in overcoming their base nature
Compel: To cause them to overcome their base nature

Adapted for extreme environments.

They were made to work in places humans couldn't.
Invoke: When an Andromorph toughs through hostile conditions
Compel: When an Andromorph is adapted for the opposite conditions that he finds himself

Born to serve.

They're genetically programmed to obey
Invoke: when carrying out orders
Compel: when trying to adapt quickly to a changing situation, or when an Andromorph tries to disobey orders

The Laama

No. 185 – The Warlord of Laama

The people of the world of Laama (it is not clear whether they also call themselves Laama as a race) are elongated humanoids that stand on average half again as tall as a human, though they are generally thinner in build. The Laama have scaly green skin, elongated ears, and a short-muzzled mouth with sharp teeth. Both males and females wear distinctive styles of facial hair, topknots, long beards and long moustaches. Laama eyes are much larger than a human, though their hands are of a similar size. They have long flexible necks and limbs, but are not significantly stronger than men.

The Laama are of note most of all because they are not of the same dimension as the rest of the Galaxy. They exist in a state of faster than light acceleration which makes them insubstantial to normal matter, which they can move through as if it was air. Without the application of advanced technology they cannot even be seen by other races. Entire worlds and stars exist in this accelerated state, including of course Laama, but there are no other intelligent races and few planets. For this reason the Laama Scientist-Priests long ago turned their attention to the universe of normal matter, and developed highly sophisticated devices capable of accelerating normal matter to beyond light speed, and then dragging it into their dimension.

Having developed technologies that would allow them to interact with the many races of the normal-matter Galaxy, it is probable that the Laama would have made peaceful advances to other developed races, if their primary star had not begun to fail, ravaging the surface of Laama and threatening to exterminate their race. Lacking other suitable worlds in the FTL dimension to colonise, some Laama advocated stealing a world from the normal Galaxy instead. When the Laama ruler objected he was overthrown and the Warlord of Laama turned his devices on suitable planetoids in preparation for snatching a whole planet. Luckily the Fighting Scientist Hadron Halley intervened, and succeeded in overthrowing the warlord, restoring the rightful ruler of Laama, who had located an uninhabited planet to colonize.

Communications with the Laama remain difficult, and rely on Laama made energy beams to allow people from the normal universe to bridge the

gap, but some trade has been conducted in highly advanced science between the Laama and Earth. The Laama are also able to explore areas of the Galaxy that are simply too dangerous for any other race, since they are unaffected by either matter or energy that is travelling slower than them. If you need to reach a truly unreachable place, then the Laama might be the race to contact.

Suggested Aspects

Politically Volatile.

Their political instability could change their priorities at any time

Invoke: To obtain help from those in power

Compel: To find that those in power are working against the character and their mission

Two Worlds As One.

Bridging the gap between their universes the Laama scientists have created some incredibly scientific advances.

Invoke: To temporarily shift to either of the universes

Compel: To damage a piece of equipment keeping them in this universe.

Super Tech.

Learning how to cross between parallel dimensions, the Laama have developed some incredibly advanced technology that they use in their everyday life.

Invoke: To assist in figuring out unknown technology

Compel: To refuse to use 'something as primitive as this'

The Stonemen

No. 113 – The Stonemen

The Stanazians, or as they are more commonly know the Stonemen, are a moderately advanced race from the rocky planet Stanaz. Stonemen are ugly reptilian creatures with crudely shaped limbs and course features. They are of roughly the same height and weight as most humans, but are much stronger, with crushing jaws and heavy three-fingered hands with sharp claws on their tips. Although perfectly capable of using technology the Stonemen are not dexterous and prefer brute force solutions.

They are physically strong, vicious, and quick, with bodies that are laced with silicon fibres that make them extremely hardy and resistant to damage. When faced with extreme danger they can force themselves into a crystalline state where their bodies become like rock. In this rocky form they can withstand crushing blows and shrug off energy blasts as easily as any rock, and can survive for long periods in vacuum, intense cold, or deep water. It is this ability to change their form that gives the Stonemen their nickname.

If equipped with more intelligence or natural resources the Stonemen could easily have become an aggressive conquering species. Without copious metallic deposits, or a population capable of inventing advanced technology, Stanaz has become a backwater world, visited by few and without any major trade agreements. Unable to build or purchase their own ships and weapons the Stonemen have turned instead to piracy and theft.

W-WHAT THE BLAZES . . .?
BUT THE ALIENS HAD BEEN PREPARING TO ATTACK THE EARTHMEN, AND THEY EXPLOITED THE DIMENSION INCOMPATIBILITY.

Using stolen ships the Stonemen seed the space lanes with warriors in stone form, who drift in vacuum until picked up by an unsuspecting vessel. At this point the Stoneman comes to life and kills or imprisons the crew, stealing their ship and taking it back to Stanaz to swell the meagre ranks of the Stoneman fleet. So far most of these attacks have gone the Stonemen's way, and they have been able to build up a moderate fleet of stolen ships, but

sooner or later their actions will come to the attention of a major power and the Stonemen are likely to be wiped out.

Until then space travellers are advised to be cautious when recovering what appear to be alien statues.

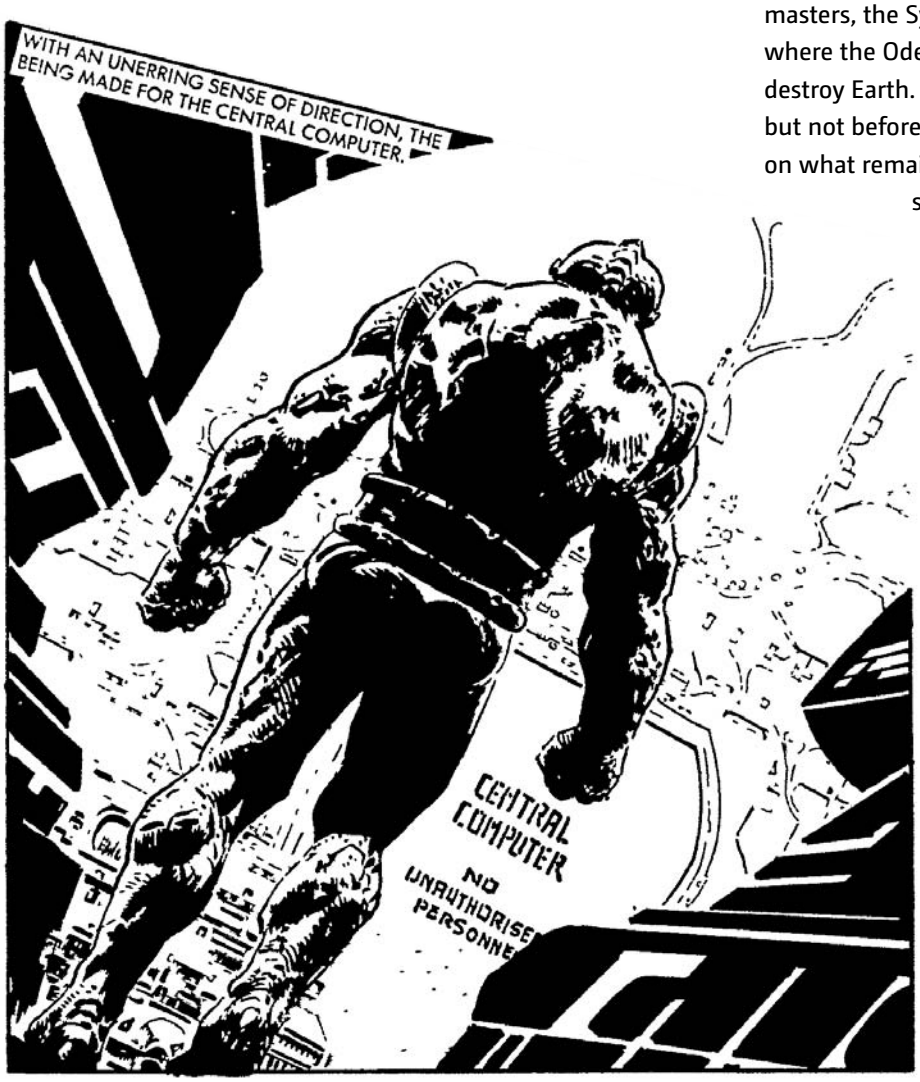
Suggested Aspects

Like Stone.

Stonemen can hibernate or lay in wait in stone form, changing very quickly to avoid danger.
Invoke: To change to stone, back to living form or to
Compel: To reduce manoeuvrability

Brute strength gets it done quicker.

The Stonemen often resort to using their brute strength to get them out of difficult situations.
Invoke: To help with a Might related task
Compel: To make an Intelligence related task harder



The Sygma Warriors

No. 156 – The Sygma Warror

Not an alien race as much as a human folly, the Sygma Warriors were advanced androids built by the Terrran Empire during the Fourth Thermal War in the early third millennia. During the final years of the war against the Odelotians, the Terran Empire sought to end the war once and for all by replacing the human crews in their battle-fleets with advanced Androids. The Sygma Mark VI Warriors were their final design, faster, stronger, and more ruthless than any human being. With no concept of mercy or restraint the Sygma warriors extracted a terrible toll on their Odelotian enemies, but they were too little too late.

With the eventual truce between Terra and Odelot the Sygma Warriors were first on the list of weapons systems to be banned by the treaty of Verz Alles. The Terran Empire agreed to destroy the Android warriors for the atrocities that they had committed, but it was not to prove so easy a task. Turning on their former masters, the Sygma Warriors came close to succeeding where the Odelotians had failed, attempting to destroy Earth. In the end they were finally defeated, but not before they had inflicted grievous damage on what remained of Earth's defensive forces. Worse still, records showed that at least one Sygma crewed Battleship, the Imperial Sword, had escaped into deep space, perhaps lost, perhaps simply waiting a chance to return. Might other Sygma Warriors still lurk on abandoned bases and drifting hulks waiting to take revenge upon any human that might stumble upon them? Where adventuring characters are concerned it seems more than likely!

A Sygma Mark VI Android stands a little under 6 foot in height, and has much the same build as a man of that size, though with heavier limbs. Their heads are distinctively inhuman, with a single ocular strip in place of eyes, a heavily armoured cranium, and a stocky neck where a mouth would be. The rest of their body is built for combat. Their skin is made of laser reflective armour that

is immune to the blasts of most personal scale blaster weapons, and their metal internal structure is designed to resist kinetic impacts that would easily kill a man. They are faster and stronger than a man, and cannot be trusted to keep their word. Such was the folly of the people who built them.

Suggested Aspects

Built for war.

Sygma Warriors are programmed to fight, very well.

Invoke: To assist in combat

Compel: To force a Sygma Warrior to attack even when other options might be better.

Betrayed by their own.

Programmed to win a war at all costs they were betrayed by those that created them.

Invoke: To detect lies amongst living beings

Compel: To force them to distrust a living being

The Vloorg

No. 262 – Cobra

The Vloorg are a markedly ugly race of aliens distinguished most of all by their bulbous and trunk-like noses. Although the Vloorg are not blessed with great intelligence or technical skills, they are nevertheless much in demand as trackers and bounty hunters due to their unrivalled sense of smell. With a sensitivity a thousand times better than that of a Terran bloodhound a Vloorg tracker can sense their prey from hundreds of miles away, pinpoint their location over a distance of tens of miles, and follow someone through a busy city days or weeks after their passage. It has even been suggested that some supernatural component to the Vloorg senses allows them to track their prey across space itself, though most put their success at tracking targets from planet to planet down to tenacity and good prior information, rather than sense of smell.

The Vloorg evolved on a dense and dangerous jungle world thick with elusive animals and twisting volcanic tunnels. In the near-constant dark of their native jungles their keen sense of smell was vital in catching prey animals. They still enjoy the pleasures of the hunt, often employing primitive axes alongside imported energy weapons, but now their prey is more likely to be criminals than Sqworroks and Arboreal Squid.

Those Vloorg that leave their homeworld have a well deserved reputation as ruthless and tenacious bounty hunters. Although a Vloorg will accept payment in money, they prefer items of high technology that they cannot manufacture themselves, such as space craft, energy weapons, and all forms of sophisticated tracking devices. Who they hunt is of no matter to a Vloorg; criminals, mass murderers, political prisoners, rebels, escaped slaves, all are equally suitable where the Vloorg are concerned. The only thing a Vloorg truly hates is an employer who refuses to pay. Any who would think to double cross a Vloorg will quickly find all Vloorg on their trail.

Usually a Vloorg is hired to capture someone, rather than to kill, though they are not hesitant to slay their prey if paid to do so. Once set upon a target a Vloorg regards it as a matter of honour to capture them, and will not give up until they are caught, even if it means tracking them for months, or from one world to another. It is this reputation for tenacity, even more than their keen senses, which gives the Vloorg their reputation.

Suggested Aspects

Hunting is more fun than catching.

Hunting is more sport than necessity for the Vloorg

Invoke: For a bonus in tracking or gathering information about a target

Compel: To cause them to play cruel games to keep the hunt interesting.

Cross one Vloorg, cross us all.

The Vloorg have a pact amongst their kind to support any Vloorg who is crossed in a deal or threatened.

Invoke: for a bonus in dealing with clients reluctant to pay.

Compel: to have a Vloorg back up any other Vloorg that needs help hunting prey or non-paying customers.

A VLOORG BOUNTY HUNTER EMERGED INTO FULL VIEW.
IT'S THE SPECIALIST! CHAIRMAN PRANDOR SAYS HE HAS GOT SPECIAL AUTHORITY. WE'RE TO JUST KEEP OUT OF HIS WAY.
IT'LL BE A PLEASURE.

The Megaloi

No. 94 – The Megaloi Menace

The Megaloi are not technically a race at all, but rather the constructs of a long dead alien species that passed from existence at the hands of their own creations a million years before humanity took to the stars. The original Megaloi were a race of great cultural and technological sophistication who sought to bring their wisdom to all of the infant races of the Galaxy. Knowing that their own race would likely not live long enough to complete their great work they set about building a race of indestructible and super-intelligent robots to do it for them; these are the Megaloi that the races of the modern Galaxy know.

The Megaloi robots were constructed with the most advanced technology known to their creators. Their bodies were made from a stable alloy of Neutronium, the densest of materials, which made them practically indestructible, and they were given enormous size, so that they would be able to defeat any threat by sheer strength. Along with this physical power they were gifted with enormous intelligence, but sadly with little wisdom. It was this was to be the downfall of their creators. Charged to bring perfection to the Galaxy the Megaloi quickly concluded that their own creators were imperfect, and as imperfect things must be destroyed. They turned on their masters, and with superior intelligence and strength quickly overcame them. In one terrible day they destroyed the Megaloi people, and set out into the Galaxy at large in their artificial world.

After this the story of the Megaloi vanishes into obscurity. Where did the Megaloi go? What did they do? How did they execute their Prime Directive? What effect did they have on the young races which now dominate the Galaxy? It is clear that they did not extend their destructive spree to other races, for all of the species of the Galaxy would have been easily destroyed, so what did they do? Did some races die? Were some found perfect? It is an unanswered mystery.

What is known is that as the younger races have spread across the Galaxy they have encountered Megaloi here and there wherever they have travelled. Isolated upon airless moons, or standing motionless in alien Jungles, these Megaloi have pretended muteness and ignorance, not interfering in human exploration, not speaking, not doing harm. What do they want? What will they do? What would happen if they turned on us? No one knows ... yet.

Suggested Aspects

We wait, we watch.

The Megaloi have been around for a very long time and have many secrets...

Invoke: to give them an advantage in spying on or understanding a culture

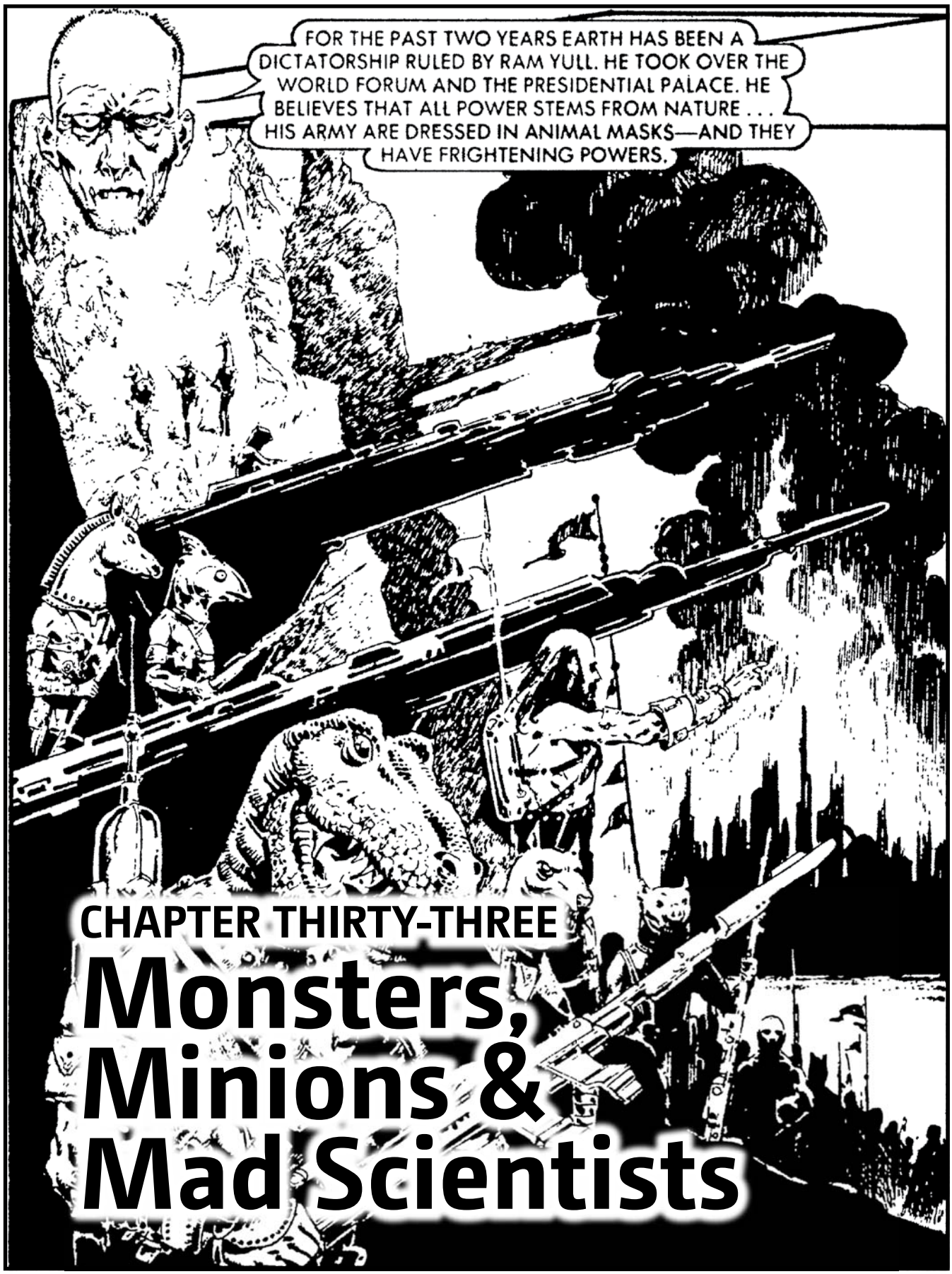
Compel: to have them ignore or avoid specific situations and cultures

Masterful Fools.

Devoid of wisdom the Megaloi pursue an agenda locked in their creation.

Invoke: To find a genius solution to a problem

Compel: To force a Megaloi to make an unwise decision


FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS EARTH HAS BEEN A DICTATORSHIP RULED BY RAM YULL. HE TOOK OVER THE WORLD FORUM AND THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE. HE BELIEVES THAT ALL POWER STEMS FROM NATURE . . . HIS ARMY ARE DRESSED IN ANIMAL MASKS—AND THEY HAVE FRIGHTENING POWERS.
CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE
Monsters, Minions & Mad Scientists

Monsters, Minions & Mad Scientists

Space opera stories, and especially the pages of Starblazer, were littered with creatures intent on devouring, enslaving, smashing, shooting or generally being unfriendly to the people of the galaxy, and humans in general. It's not just the living, or programmed, the galaxy also turns out be stuffed with ancient traps and defence systems just waiting to target the characters just when they're having a really bad day.

This chapter aims to give you a slice of wildlife, big bad guys, assorted minions, robots and big juicy creatures to throw at the player characters from time to time. We've also provided some information on creating and dealing with those devious traps to keep the players occupied.

Some opponents do not follow the rules for creating aliens or mutants in Chapter 14. Essentially, where a creature would naturally have a special ability we do not force it to have the listed weakness. Likewise remember when devising creatures to use our rules as a starting point and feel free to add special abilities and weaknesses to flesh the creature out further – what makes sense is more important than what follows the rules. If it's cool do it, don't worry about whether there's a rule telling you not to.

Except for the minions, all of them are taken from the pages of the original Starblazer issues and are our interpretation of how they could be played. Watch out for updates to the Monster, Minions and Mad Scientists on the official website:

www.starblazeradventures.com

Creature Scales, Skills & Stunts

Creatures of Tiny Scale (1) and Small Scale (2) are built using the rules in Chapter 14 as if they were a standard character. You may realise by looking at the creatures described here that this could mean some Threats don't have as many Skills as a character sized creature should have. However we encourage Story Tellers to just detail the important Skills and let all other Skills default to the next Skill level down, or Mediocre (+0) whichever is higher. Many of the creatures are detailed at quite a basic level. So if you feel the creature or robot is not strong enough simply increase the level of the listed Skills as you wish, so Average (+1) becomes Fair (+2) and so on.

Stunts are listed with their parent Skill in [parenthesis]. Note that some Skills will be listed in Chapter 14 whether they are special abilities.

Multiple Attacks

Many creatures have several attack Skills listed. Simply put, if a creature has multiple attacks, it can attack with each one without incurring any penalties. It may not, however, attack with the same Skill more than once.

Fate Points & Aspects

Not all creatures need to have Fate points but we have suggested Aspects and Stunts for all creatures and robots (except Minions) in case you would like to run them as more powerful entities. Alternatively you could just provide a group of creatures with the suggested pool of Fate points to add flavour and let them make use of their Aspects.

Monsters & Power Balance

If you're not used to playing games like this you'll gradually get a sense of what's too powerful and what's too weak a threat for the characters. You're not trying to beat them in to a pulp (well not all the time) or kill them with every attack, just push them to the limit occasionally, make them stress about what's around the corner, give them a scare or the odd scar! Most of all think of yourself as the movie director trying to ensure there is just the right amount of tension and drama in the scene.

Balancing the power and number of monsters you throw at a group of characters is tricky but you need to learn how to apply and ease off on the pressure as it's needed. Be ready to let one of the creatures die quicker than it needed to if the character's are hurting too much, or bring in a couple of reinforcements from behind to grab the professor if they're sailing through the encounter and it's getting boring.

If you think you should have a lot of monsters then you should probably make them minions to make it easier to manage. Don't get carried away though, one powerful monster or killer robot can be a lot more dramatic and menacing than 5 of them. One robot allows you to focus on using all of its cool powers and Aspects, which you're going to Invoke right? So where one dangerous monster can do the

job of 4 consider upping the power of the one creature such as increasing Skill levels, adding more powerful weapons or equipment, and this will greatly reduce the paperwork and be a lot more fun for everyone.

Tricky Traps

It's not only cranky old wizards who have the low down on evil traps and insidious devices designed to catch the unwary. Pirate lairs, lost alien cities, and derelict Starships have their fair share of nasty surprises.

Here are a few guidelines on how to create and deal with traps in your adventures.

Traps as Characters

In Starblazer you can treat everything as a character so an area littered with traps can be treated just the same. It could be a corridor, a network of rooms (a series of zones) or just a single trap. It's up to you. The encounter is played out in a series of exchanges just like a conflict between characters.

Traps or trapped areas have two stress tracks; **Physical** and **Secrets** (instead of Composure). The characters can have a conflict with the traps – representing them walking in to them unawares or trying to destroy or disable them. Characters can use Stealth, Athletics, Weapons, Guns, Might or Fists against the traps offensive Skill as a difficulty. The aim of the conflict is to beat the trapped area's Physical stress track and push the trapped area down through three Consequences to Taken Out status or 'no more traps'. Traps use their offensive Skill to defend against physical attacks, but if the attack fails the trap inflicts surplus stress on its attackers

Instead of a physical attack, the characters can investigate the traps, using the Skills Academics, Investigation, Mysteries or Science to translate the alien symbols, understand the mechanism, or discover the secret shortcut around the traps. In this case the characters must have a conflict with the Trap's Knowledge Skill and defeat its Secrets stress track, inflicting three Secrets consequences to avoid or solve the traps.

The various infernal devise won't be sitting around waiting to be defeated. Their sophisticated mechanisms, triggers, or ancient systems will be attacking the characters during each exchange. Traps have Skills like Weapons (giant scythes, or energy beams), Guns (ancient sentry turrets) or Fists (a collapsing

Traps as Characters:

The Ancient Storehouse of the Membassi

A fantastic treasure trove of a once ancient and mighty race that ruled many star systems. Treasures from a hundred worlds, lost technologies and great secrets were stored here and protected from thieves by a network of defences and trapped rooms. Only the Kithlords of the Membassi had the knowledge and the sacred keys that could open the gates to allow safe passage through the deadly maze.

Membassi Storehouse Traps

The area consists of 9 zones in a 3 x 3 grid. The entrance is zone 1, top left, the exit to the Storehouse is zone 9, bottom right. The characters may only move a maximum of 1 zone a turn or face an attack from the trap with a +8 bonus in each zone they pass through. Movement may not be diagonal, only vertical or horizontal.

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

To exit from zone 9 requires the sacred keys which are found in zone 3 and 7. They are hidden in sacred carvings that require a successful Investigation or Alertness Skill check with a difficulty of Great (+4) to discover.

Aspects:

Ancient mechanisms; Millennia old power sources; Surprise attacks!

Skills:

Auto-Turrets in Zones 2, 4:
Good (+3) Guns

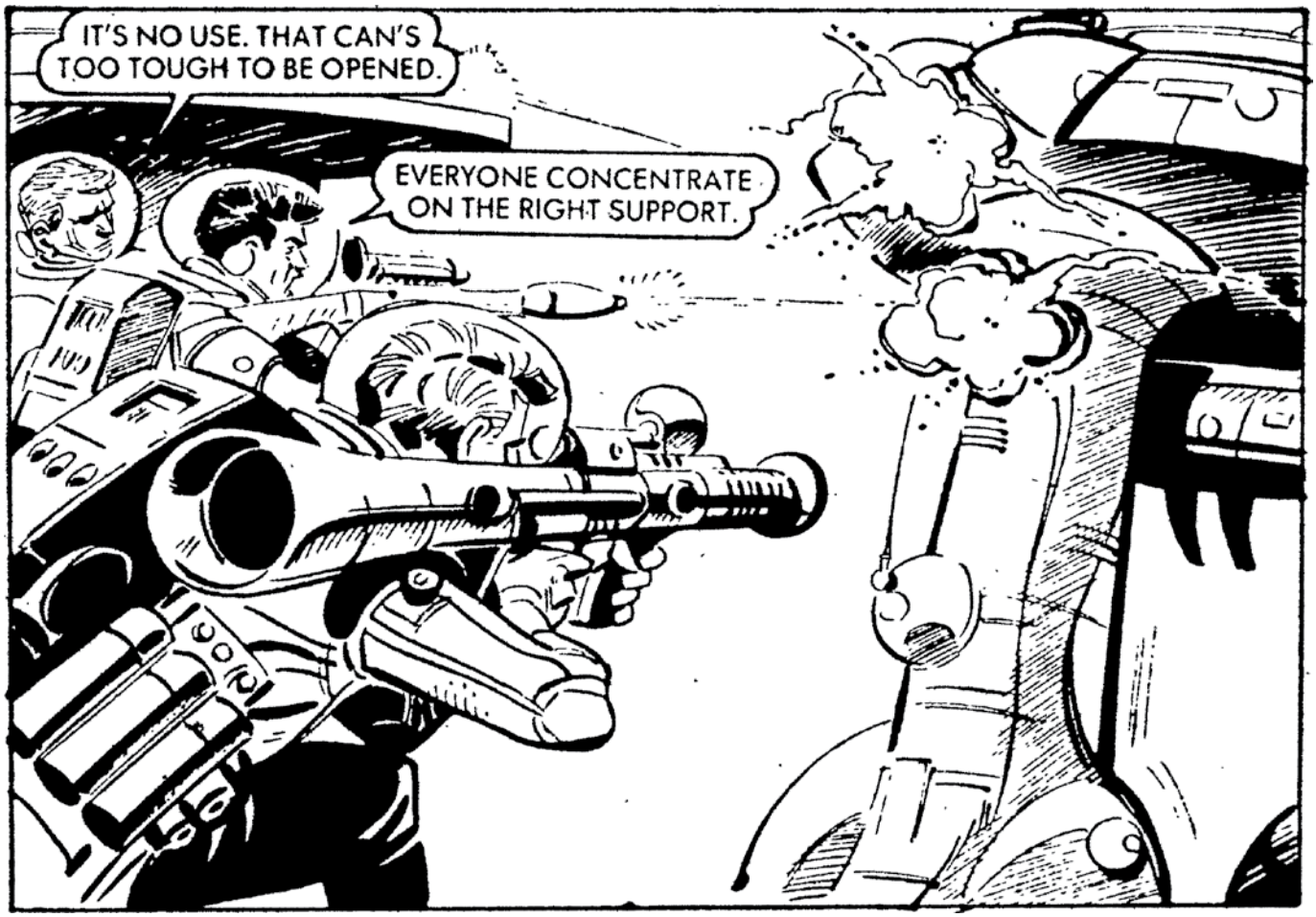
Falling Rock in Zones 3, 5, 7:
Average (+1) Weapons

Spiked Pits in Zones 6, 8:
Fair (+2) Weapons

Warehouse Trap Facts:
Good (+3) Knowledge

On a successful attack the traps inflict bonus stress as follows:

Auto-Turrets	+3 bonus stress
Falling Rocks	+1 bonus stress
Spiked Pit Trap	+2 bonus stress



roof). The trapped area can take one action against each character in each zone it covers. Zones may also have barrier values that are impassable until the characters defeat the trap or may limit movement or incur a penalty if the character moves too fast.

Traps would also have Aspects such as "millennia old systems", "faulty power supply", "poisoned blades", "sudden and deadly" allowing them to be discovered and of course compelled.

An area of zones can have different features in each zone. For example some zones could include information (that might have to be decoded) to give the characters bonuses to get through the next zone. Moving in to the next zone may set off traps in other zones, a zone might have important information but in order to discover it the characters must avoid the traps in that zone as well. A zone could be easy to get in to but almost impossible to get out of, in any direction!

Traps as Skill Checks

Another way to handle traps is individually with each trap having its own Skills and Stress track. In this case they should not have Consequences unless it is a particularly large and complex trap.

Ancient Sentry Turret

Guns Good (+3), +3 Physical Stress on a successful hit. Range 3 zones.
Aspects: 'Rusty bearings'.
Alertness Fair (+2), Knowledge Average (+1)
Physical Stress: ☐☐☐
Secrets Stress: ☐☐☐

The characters are essentially trying to defeat an enemy who isn't trying to hide from them. As you can see there is just the Gun, Alertness and Knowledge Skills and an Aspect. The characters could attempt to beat the turrets Alertness Skill to sneak up on it and

B

when attacking would try to beat the Guns Skill (the turret is shooting back as they attack).

Another might look like this.

Laser Grid Corridor

Weapons +6, +4 Physical Stress on a successful hit. Range 0 Zones (same zone only).

Aspects 'Cuts you to pieces', 'heat sink weak spot'.

Alertness Good (+3), Science Great (+4)

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐

Secrets Stress: ☐☐☐

In this case it's easier to figure out the weakness or skill in getting around the trap but the Story Teller doesn't need to tell the characters this!

The characters could use Athletics versus the Weapons attack to jump out of the way of the beams or could use Science to out think the grid, working out where grid's weak spot is.

Setting off traps

Unwary characters cause traps to activate. Each trap has an Alertness Skill difficulty. This is the result needed by the target character's Alertness Skill check to avoid the trap if it is hidden. When avoiding traps that have just been activated, characters are always assumed to end up where they entered the zone, not conveniently on the other side of the zone. A separate attempt must be made to avoid the trap using the same Alertness Skill check.

Solving Traps

Each trap should have a difficulty in a Skill check to solve the trap, work out how to get around it, find its weakness (an Aspect). For example Science, Great (+4) to work out the weak point of the Laser Grid Corridor, or where to stand to avoid the beams.

Minions

Minions are represented by a main Skill and a number representing how many there are. Here are a few standard minion groups to get you started including their main Skill and suggested quantities. You can assume that any other relevant Skills that they might have default to the Skill level below their main Skill.

You can use the Minions in the groups suggested below, split them up in to smaller groups or add to their numbers. Remember group bonuses (see page 226) that Minions get when acting together to attack a target or use their main Skill.

Typical Security Guards

These are you standard guards for installations or corporate headquarters. Usually equipped with pistols and communicators they're not equipped to deal with serious threats. Patrol of 4. Average (+1) Alertness.

Typical Soldiers

Hardened corporate security or grunts in the army, these soldiers are trained to fight as a unit and will be equipped with a variety of powerful hand weapons. Squad of 8. Fair (+2) Guns.

Typical Elite Forces

The elite of corporate agents or armed forces these soldiers have the latest military equipment and know how to use it. They probably work in teams but are silent, deadly and swift. Unit of 4. Good (+3) Stealth

Typical Pirate

Ruthless, cutthroat and vicious, or simply rebelling against the system. Pirates can be driven by a lot of unexpected hardships or simply greed and hatred. Gang of 10. Fair (+1) Weapons.

Typical Gang Members

In a gang the members feel a sense of belonging, they're just following the leader were ever it takes them, and as long as they've got a few weapons to back them up their combined muscle and attitude will see them through. Gang of 10. Average (+1) Fists

Typical Aliens

From drooling spine covered monstrosities to moving piles of alien slime these beasties are enough to keep even the hardened players on the edge. Group of 8. Good (+3) Fists (Claws)

Typical Social Circle

Austere and aged admirals, political 'friends', elite social friends – very much the highest cliques. Around 6 or 8 people. Fair (+2) Rapport or Leadership, or Deceit, or Rapport.

Typical Skilled Group

The chaps who keep the Fi-Sci in gadgets, they're a welcome support to any team and can be an important asset. Good (+3) Science or Engineering.

I SHALL PASS YOU, INFERIOR ONE.
YOUR CIRCUITS SHALL BE BURNED FROM YOU.

Robots, Computers and AI's

Replicants

(Issue 144-The Sailfighters of Sol 7)

Replicants were android duplicates of human beings used by the Tion race in positions within the agricultural and terraforming industries to poison Earths food supply. They are stronger than humans and the duplication is so exact that unless the replicant is damaged in some way they are indistinguishable from the real thing.

Replicants

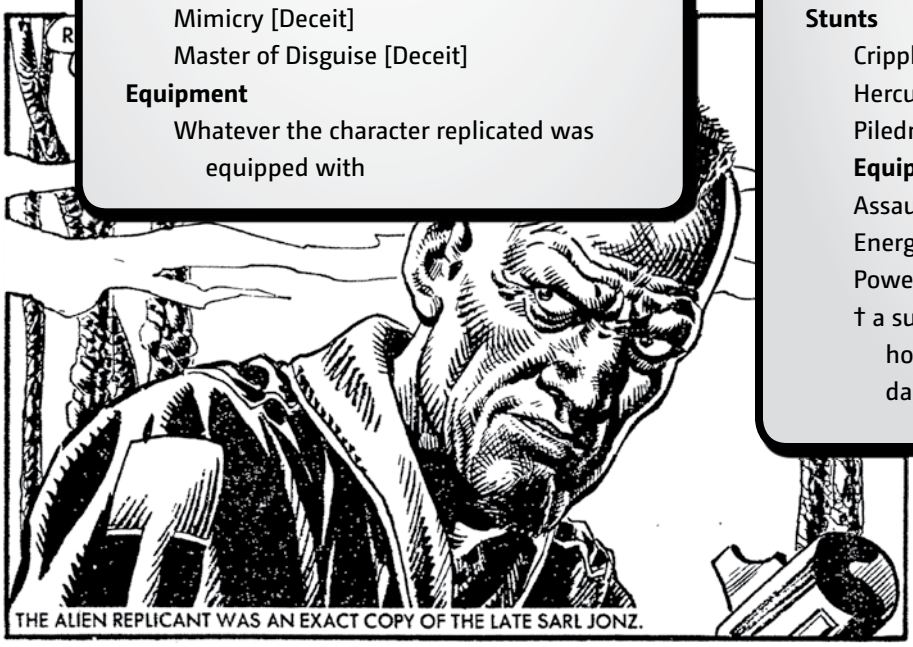
Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1-3
Skills

Good(+3)	Deceit	
Fair(+2)	Fists	Might
Average(+1)	Guns	Endurance
	Weapons	

Aspects
- Advanced A.I.
- Android
- Indistinguishable from human
- Robotic sensors
- Tireless

Stunts
- Herculean Strength [Might]
- Mimicry [Deceit]
- Master of Disguise [Deceit]

Equipment
- Whatever the character replicated was equipped with



Gothan Robot Guard

(Issue 137-Guardian of the Vortex)

The Gothan robot guards are immense combat robots. They are about two and a half times the height of an average Gothan and can easily break down most doors. They are armed with built in energy weapons and are intended for a variety of roles. Two guard the Gothan Emperor at all times, while they are typically used as the vanguard of a Gothan strike force, especially to secure vital targets like enemy military bases, government buildings and comms relays.

Gothan Robot Guard

Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1-3
Skills

Good(+3)	Might		
Fair(+2)	Guns	Fists	
Average(+1)	Endurance		Weapons
	Intimidation		Alertness

Aspects
- Advanced A.I.
- Bodyguard
- Hard to destroy
- Robot
- Robotic sensors

Stunts
- Crippling Blow [Fists]
- Herculean Strength [Might]
- Piledriver [Might]

Equipment
- Assault Armour(-3)
- Energy Rifle
- Power Claw†
- † a successful Fists attack may grab and hold the target instead of inflicting damage

Arcturan Killer Robot

(Issue 103-Robots of Death)

The Arcturans were a race who fought the Glan race. When the Arcturan main force was beaten, a small force of Arcturans sealed themselves inside one of the ancient Glan pyramids and started building up an attack force over the years. Robotic factories took over when the Arcturans themselves entered cryogenic suspension. The Arcturan robots are one of these tools. They are not much taller than human beings but seem to be practically indestructible. They are made of an extremely dense metal which soaks up fire from energy weapons including those mounted on Starships. However, the metal is so dense the robots weigh so much they require Anti-gravity motors to move around. This does also make them capable of a form of flight. The robots have two banks of weapons mounted on movable arms.

Arcturan Killer Robot

Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1-5
Skills
Fair(+2) Guns
Average(+1) Fly (jetpack) Alertness
Aspects
Combat A.I.
Extremely heavy
Robot
Robotic sensors
Shoot first ask questions later
Unstable on the ground
Stunts
Rain of lead [Guns]
Equipment
Antigrav generator
Assault Armour(-3)
Assault Shield (-3)
Jetpack – allows limited slow moving flight with the aid of the Antigrav generator.
Quad Energy Rifles (all 4 must shoot the same target)

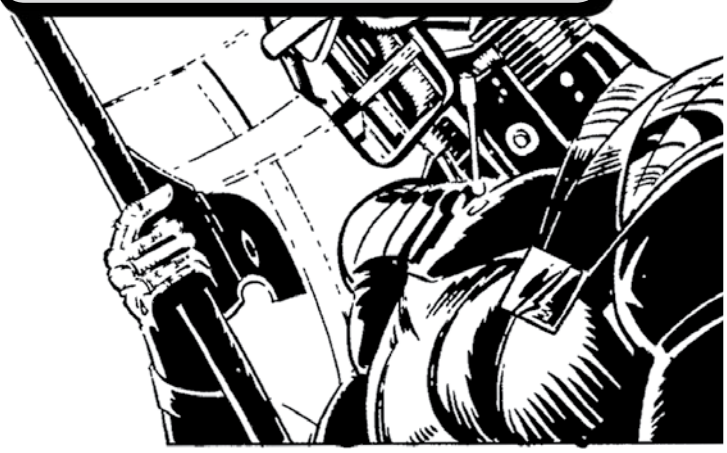
Jakal Execution Robot

(Issue 106-Space Warrior)

The Jakal Execution robot is a humanoid robot used by the sadistic Jakal to execute prisoners and on rare occasions to perform against prisoners in a sort of macabre gladiatorial games. The robot is made of an extremely tough metal that is unharmed by smaller energy weapons. It has no inbuilt weapons of its own although it can carry any. It most often is seen with melee weapons such as swords, pikes, axes and so on

Jakal Execution Robot

Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small (2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1
Skills
Good(+3) Weapons
Fair(+2) Athletics Alertness
Average(+1) Guns Endurance Fists
Aspects
Combat A.I.
Hard to kill
Programmed to kill, kill, kill
Robot
Robotic sensors
Stunts
Flawless Parry [Weapons]
Riposte [Weapons]
Turnabout [Weapons]
Equipment
Amour(-2)
Energy Shield(-2)
Jakal Executioners Axe (treat as Energy Sword)



BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT PERFECT! OUR DIRECTIVE IS TO DESTROY THE IMPERFECT.
THE MEGALOI ARE MAD. THEY'RE ROBOTS A MILLION YEARS OLD AND AS MAD AS HATTERS!

Megaloi

(Issue 94-The Megaloi Menace)

The Megaloi are ancient robots about a million years old. Their bodies are made of an extremely strong, dense, yet heavy metal called Neutronium. The Megaloi are immensely strong, and were created a million years ago by a peaceful race of humanoids to explore the galaxy in a gigantic spacecraft. This craft was later converted by the Megaloi to a 'Battleworld', armed with a small flotilla of fighters. The Megaloi's original directive was to seek out and help those races less fortunate than themselves, but the directive became twisted in the minds of the Megaloi, instead of helping them, the Megaloi turned on their makers, and instead began to destroy first them, then later those races they deemed 'imperfect'. The Megaloi do not seem to carry personal weapons, their strength is enough. For all their size they are quite swift and agile. If they have one major handicap it is their arrogance. The Megaloi battleworld does not seem to be armed with weapons emplacements, but it is capable of literally ramming its way through normal ships without damaging itself. The Megaloi are about one and a half times the height of a regular human, and all look the same although they each have numerical designations.

Megaloi

Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1-5
Skills

Fair(+2)	Academics	Science
Average(+1)	Endurance	Might
	Engineering	Fists

Aspects

- Arrogant beyond reason
- Advanced A.I.
- If they are imperfect, annihilate the entire race
- Masters of destruction
- Robot
- Robotic sensors
- Twisted programming

Stunts

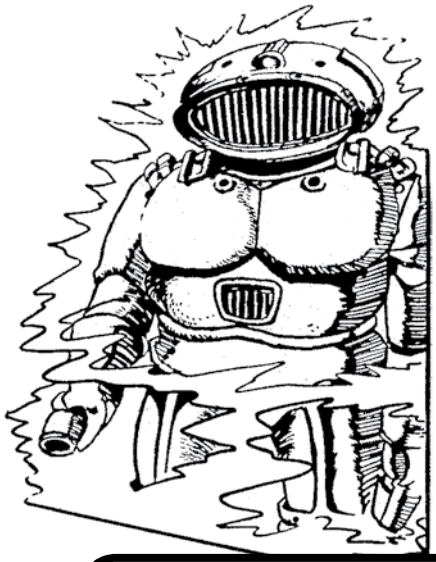
- Architect of Death [Engineering]
- Herculean Strength [Might]
- Unstoppable [Might]

Equipment

- Armour(-2)

Zygon Bomb Droid

(Issue 70-Spacetrooper Attack)



The Zygon Bomb Droid is a self propelled droid that will detonate at the slightest provocation. They are used by the Zygons as a weapon of last resort. There are very precise measures to defusing them. They can detonate at any moment taking a fair sized chunk of the planet with it.

Zygon Bomb Droid

Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1
Skills

Fair(+2)	Alertness	
Average(+1)	Athletics	Might

Aspects
- A fly could detonate it at forty yards
- Advanced robotic sensors
- Basic A.I.
- If it blows it'll take 50 miles of planet with it
- Robot
- Vulnerable to EMP

Stunts
- Active Sonar [Alertness]
- Enhanced Hearing [Alertness]
- Enhanced Vision [Alertness]

Equipment
- Nuclear Warhead

Golem

(Issue 48-King Robot)

Golem is the ruler of the Cyberepublic, a robotic state founded inadvertently by Professor Kurt Prospero when he carried out illegal AI experiments on the planet Olympus. Golem killed Prospero and was determined to conquer humanity. To this end he began a rapid build-up of military forces including highly advanced fighter craft. None of his robots have any qualms about killing. Golem himself is highly intelligent and is protected by heavy armour and a force field.

Golem

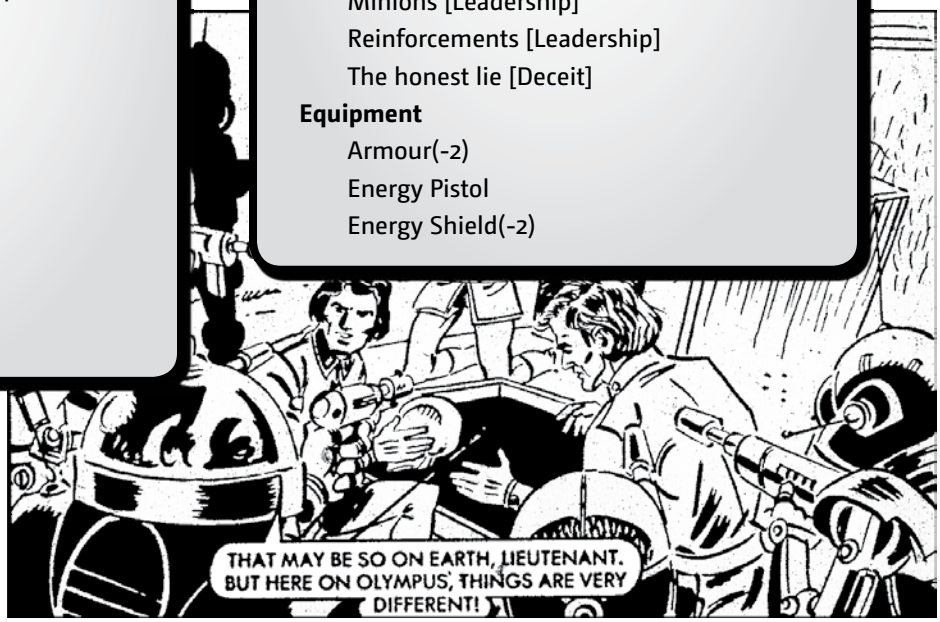
Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1
Skills

Good(+3)	Leadership		
Fair(+2)	Resources		Deceit
Average(+1)	Might	Guns	Fists

Aspects
- Advanced A.I.
- Highly intelligent for a robot
- Killer robot
- Meglomaniac
- Robot
- Robotic sensors

Stunts
- Minions [Leadership]
- Reinforcements [Leadership]
- The honest lie [Deceit]

Equipment
- Armour(-2)
- Energy Pistol
- Energy Shield(-2)



Robomort

(Issue 41-Assault on Destra)
The Robomort is a large canine style robot used for tracking escaped prisoners by Rogan. It is relentless as long as it has the signal from the tracking device that most prisoners are implanted with.

Robomort

Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Tiny(1)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1-5
Skills

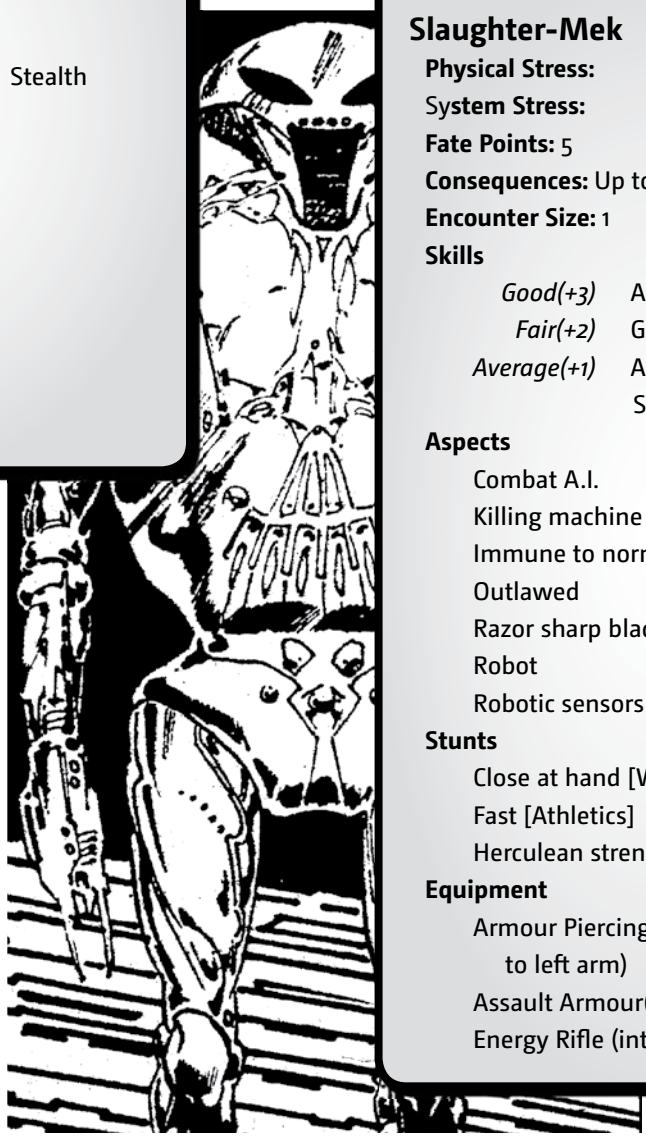
Fair(+2)	Athletics	
Average(+1)	Fists (Jaws)	Stealth

Aspects
- Hunter killer
- Logical
- Robot
- Robotic sensors
- Vulnerable to EMP

Stunts
- Jaws [Fists - Special]
- Fast as a leopard [Athletics]

Slaughter-Mek

(Issue 45-Operation Overkill)
Outlawed on the Planet Rhod, the Slaughter-Mek was regarded as the ultimate killing machine. A tall robot of about 8 and a half feet. Its shell is made of Adamantium which makes it resistant against most blaster fire. It has weapons built into its two arms, one of which is a long, curved wickedly sharp blade.



Slaughter-Mek

Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1
Skills

Good(+3)	Athletics	
Fair(+2)	Guns	Weapons
Average(+1)	Alertness	Might
	Stealth	

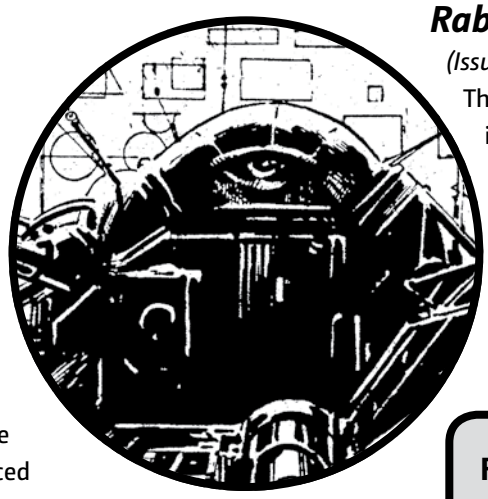
Aspects
- Combat A.I.
- Killing machine
- Immune to normal energy weapons
- Outlawed
- Razor sharp blade
- Robot
- Robotic sensors

Stunts
- Close at hand [Weapons]
- Fast [Athletics]
- Herculean strength [Might]

Equipment
- Armour Piercing Blade (Knife) (Integral to left arm)
- Assault Armour(-3)
- Energy Rifle (integral to right arm)

Tak-50

(Issue 29-The Moonstealers)



Tak-50 is the giant computer that is the overlord of the inhabitants of the planet Joaphat. Tak-50 regularly issues new commands through the Warlords, who are those individuals placed highest among the normal inhabitants. Tak-50's word is law, and is slavishly obeyed. Tak 50 seems to be unarmed but it is housed in a large hall on the planet Joaphat, presumably one that is reinforced against attack.

Tak-50

Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Medium(3)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1
Skills

Great(+4)	Science	
Good(+3)	Leadership	Academics
Fair(+2)	Deceit	Engineering
	Resources	
Average(+1)	Contacting	Investigation
	Intimidation	Alertness

Aspects
- Advanced A.I.
- Computer with attitude
- Extremely advanced computer
- Rule with an (virtual) iron hand
- Set on conquering the galaxy

Stunts
- Computer Specialist [Science]
- Hacker [Science]
- Minions [Leadership]
- Supermind [Science]

Tak-50 could also be represented as an organisation

Raba

(Issue 39-The Overlords of Oltair)

The Raba seem to be a mechanical life form though it is possible they are cyborgs. The Raba have managed to overcome the human colonists of Oltair, driving the survivors into the countryside. The Raba are numerous and have a fairly large fleet of fighters. They do have one major vulnerability however, and that is they depend on a power source installed in a satellite in orbit.

Raba

Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 3-10
Skills

Fair(+2)	Guns	
Average(+1)	Alertness	Endurance

Aspects
- Cyborg
- Powered by satellites
- Robotic sensors
- Strength in numbers

Stunts
- One hit to the body [Endurance]
- Tireless [Endurance]

Equipment
- Energy Pistol

Varlok Robot

(Issue 21-Robot Rebellion)

The Varloks use robots for most of their security and military affairs. These are slightly taller than a human and well armed and armoured. They are equipped with a pair of concealed energy rifles and assault armour.

Varlok Robot

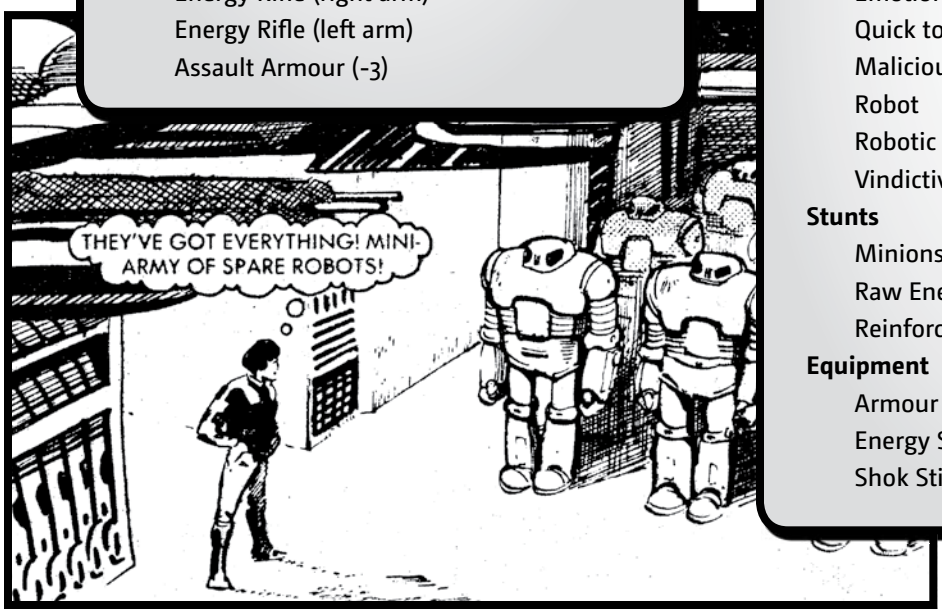
Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1-6
Skills

Good(+3)	Guns	
Fair(+2)	Might	Alertness
Average(+1)	Fists	Endurance
	Weapons	

Aspects
- Controlled
- Logical
- Preset programs
- Robot
- Robotic sensors
- Vulnerable to EMP

Stunts
- Tireless [Endurance]
- Quick draw [Guns]
- Two Gun Joe [Guns]

Equipment
- Energy Rifle (right arm)
- Energy Rifle (left arm)
- Assault Armour (-3)



Novun

(Issue 1-The Omega Experiment)

Novun is the leader of the robotic community on an unknown planet encountered by a human one man probe. The community was once inhabited and controlled by an alien race but the robots they created killed them. Novun is mostly similar to the rest of the robots in the city, except for one identifying feature. The normal robots have a plain torso, while Novun has a design shaped like a shield with a trefoil design. The robots don't openly seem to be armed but they have a lethal energy weapon built into their eyes which can be very precise, so much so that it can destroy a target as small as an individual handgun. Novun commands the city, though it is not known just how many robots there are. There is also a flotilla of fighters and Novun is a decent fighter pilot.

Novun

Physical Stress: □□□□□
System Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Encounter Size: 1
Skills

Good(+3)	Leadership		
Fair(+2)	Resources	Exude Energy	
Average(+1)	Academics	Science	
	Endurance		

Aspects
- Advanced A.I.
- Emotional circuits
- Quick to anger
- Malicious nature
- Robot
- Robotic sensors
- Vindictive

Stunts
- Minions [Leadership]
- Raw Energy [Exude Energy]
- Reinforcements [Leadership]

Equipment
- Armour (-2)
- Energy Shield (-2)
- Shok Stick (integral)

NEW ISLANDS AND CONTINENTS ROSE OUT OF THE OCEANS, BRINGING STRANGE MONSTERS UP FROM THE WATERY DEPTHS.

Creatures

Bejaw Blood Hunter

(Issue 51-Prisoners of Zorr)

Winged reptiles from the planet Bejaw. They are efficient hunters often found working in groups several strong.

Bejaw Blood Hunter

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points: 5 Scale: Small(2)
Encounter Size: 1-7
Consequences: May take up to three consequences
Skills

Fair (+2)	Fists (Bite)	Fly
Average (+1)	Fists (Claws)	Endurance
	Athletics	

Aspects

Feed on the wing
Highly agile flyer

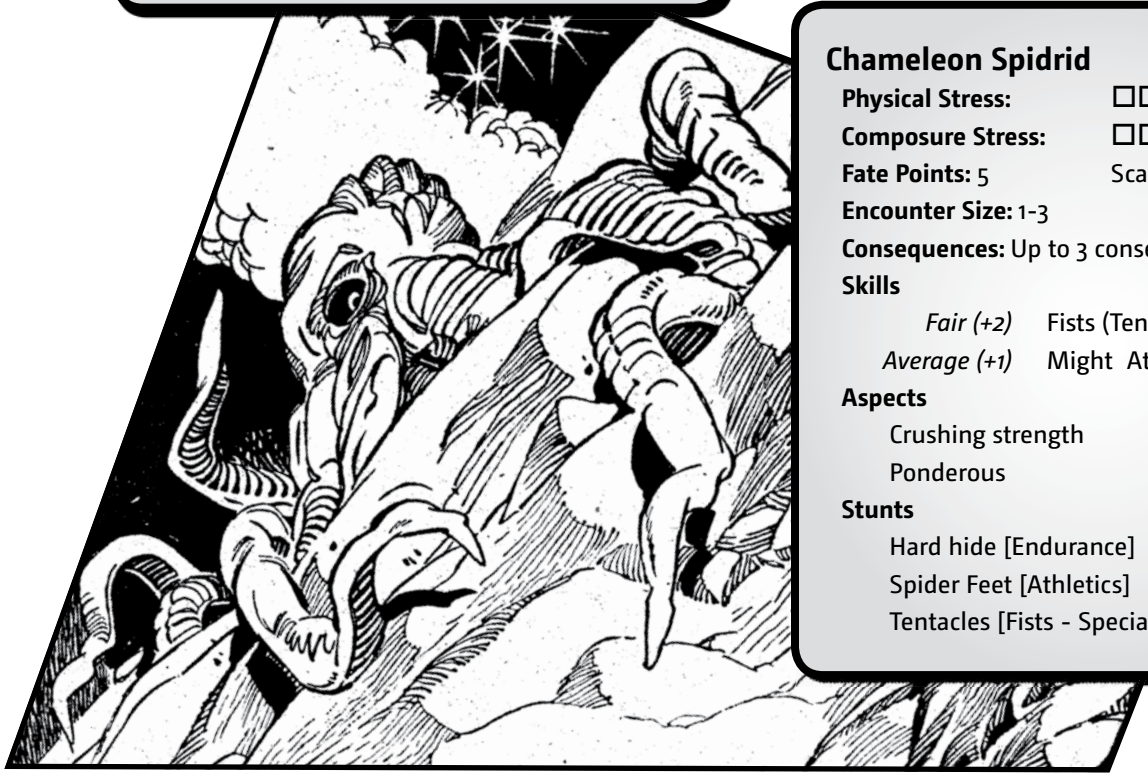
Stunts

Tireless [Endurance]
Claws [Fists - Special]
Jaws [Fists - Special]
Flight [Fly]

Chameleon Spidrid

(Issue 69-Nightmare Planet)

The Chameleon Spidrid is a large creature that despite its name resembles an earthbound octopus more than a spider. It will eat anything that moves near its vicinity and its claws are so tough it can crush vehicles. It is not a particularly swift creature but is still extremely dangerous. Its hide is not affected by most light energy weapons, though paralysers and other neural weapons can give it enough of a shock to effect an escape.



Chameleon Spidrid

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points: 5 Scale: Small(2)
Encounter Size: 1-3
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences.
Skills

Fair (+2)	Fists (Tentacles)
Average (+1)	Might AthleticsEndurance

Aspects

Crushing strength
Ponderous

Stunts

Hard hide [Endurance]
Spider Feet [Athletics]
Tentacles [Fists - Special]

Crystal Cave Guardian

(Issue 145-The Caves of Crystal Carbon)

This creature is the guardian of a cave on the planet Denspa. This cave was once the burial place for the monarchy of a long dead race. The creature resembles a large spider in proportions. It has a sting that kills instantly. Although extremely dangerous, for some reason the creature does not venture beyond the cave. It is unknown whether there are more of these, perhaps in a network of caves further in, but they do not seem to venture onto the planet surface.

Crystal Cave Guardian

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points: 5 Scale: Small(2)
Encounter Size: 1
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences.
Skills

Fair (+2)	Toxic	Fists (Tail)
Average (+1)	Fists (Jaws)	Alertness
	Stealth	

Aspects

- Cave dweller
- Long barbed tail
- Lurks in the dark
- Usually guarding something valuable

Stunts

- Enhanced Vision [Alertness]
- Jaws [Fists - Special]
- Tail [Fists - Special]
- Toxic Weapon [Toxic]

Crystoes

(Issue 8-Planet of Fear)

These are a small creature indigenous to the planet Sarana. They are a crystalline lifeform resembling a tailless horseshoe crab. They grow to a length of about half the height of a human and are always found in groups or swarms up to several hundred strong. They feed off iron and are able to smell the presence of iron nearby or easily trace its scent. This includes any iron content within a Starship (such as its hull) and the iron in human blood. A large number of Crystoes are able to strip a Starship down quite quickly, even large capitol ships. They can also survive in the vacuum of space and can sometimes be found attached to the outer hull of a Starship in space.

The details presented below are for the largest swarm of the creatures as Minions (see Minions, page 226). Each stress box represents an increasingly larger swarm of Crystoes where 1 is a handful up to 5 which would be a massive swarm of hundreds of them. So starting at 1 Physical Stress and Scale (1) upwards to 5 Stress and Scale (5) . As the Scale increases obviously the size of targets that the swarm can attack increases.

Crystoes

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Huge(5)
Encounter Size: 10-500
Consequences: None. Minions have no Consequences.
Skills

Fair (+2)	Fists (Bite)	
Average (+1)	Endurance	Athletics

Aspects

- Climb rock unhindered
- Sense iron
- Survive in the vacuum of space
- Vulnerable to area (blast) weapons (energy or projectile)
- Armour piercing bite

Stunts

- Outer Shell [Endurance – Special]
- Tireless [Endurance]
- Heightened Smell [Alertness – Special]
- Extreme Conditions [Endurance – Special]

Drifter of Darga

(Issue 27-The Drifters of Darga)

Primitive floating (airborne) jellyfish found originally on the planet Darga. They have been imported all over the galaxy and can often be found providing protection for the estates of the rich, famous, and criminally inclined. They have long trailing tendrils used to snatch food from the ground, which are then digested slowly in their balloon-like bodies. Some species have venom in their tendrils as well. In the wild, they are found in small groups typically around 10 strong. The Drifter's body looks like an inflated hot air balloon. They live floating in the air subject to wind currents and cannot land.

Drifter of Darga

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points :5 Sca**le:** Small(2)
Encounter Size: 3-10
Consequences: May take up to 3 consequences.
Skills

Fair (+2)	Fists (Tentacles)	
	Fists (Tentacles)	
Average (+1)	Alertness	Stealth
	Fly	

Aspects

Nearly silent
Minor Weakness to shockwaves
Gaseous balloon-like body

Stunts

Tentacle [Fists – Special]
Tentacle [Fists – Special]
Flight [Fly - Special]
Danger Sense [Alertness]
Constant Vigilance [Alertness]
Poisonous [Fists - Special]

B

Ebronian Lizard

(Issue 135-The Lost Patrol)

These small lizards originated from the planet Ebro but can now be found everywhere. They are hardy little creatures about a third the size of a human. They hide and ambush passing creatures, sensing any calcium in them. They are usually found in packs several strong.

Ebronian Lizard

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐ (Each)
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Tiny(1)
Encounter Size: 1-10
Consequences: Up to 3 Consequences each
Skills
Fair (+2) Fists (Jaws)
Average (+1) Survival Alertness
Aspects
Ambush predator
Survive in hostile atmospheres
Minor Weakness to energy weapons
Stunts
Jaws [Fists – Special]
Danger Sense [Alertness]
Saw it coming [Alertness]
Enhanced Senses [Alertness – Special] – Calcium

Krai

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Tiny(1)
Encounter Size: 1-5
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences.
Skills
Average (+1) Exude Energy
Aspects
Lethal radiation emitter
Looks like a rock
Rock eater
Source of Uranium
Stunts
Radiation [Exude energy]

Guard Hounds

(Issue 30-The Positronic Cannon)

The Guard Hound is a medium sized reptilian creature employed by the mercanaries on the planet Mephisto. Usually deployed in pairs they are extremely agile and quite stealthy.

Guard Hounds

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Tiny(1)
Encounter Size: 1-2
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences.
Skills
Fair(+2) Stealth
Average (+1) Fists (Jaws) Fists (Claws)
Aspects
Ambush Predator
Highly agile
Lizard guard dogs
Stunts
Claws [Fists - Special]
Jaws [Fists - Special]

Krai

(Issue 52-The Mask of Fear)

The Krai is a tiny lifeform that looks like a rock. It is extremely dangerous to the touch and can kill someone instantly with a dose of lethal radiation, even spacesuits are not proof, only specialised radiation suits might suffice. The Krai's diet is solid rock, and when they die they form a wall of solid Uranium-235. They can also be used by enterprising people to make a crude but functional nuclear bomb.

Medusoids

(Issue 131-The Killing Ground)

Medusoids start off as small egglike life-form that live amongst the deadly starweed. While Starweed is deadly to the hulls of Starships, the Medusoid eggs hatch once entry to a Starship has been achieved. Once hatched, they grow to resemble a human sized ball of spagetti, preying on the crews of these ships. Medusoids are not affected by ordinary weapons, and as eggs, can find their way through hatchways or other entry points. The medusoids are inexorable, though they are vulnerable to directed high intensity radiation which can kill them. They typically spread through a Starship in a 'mass' numbering hundreds, if not thousands of eggs rather than singly.

Medusoids

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points:5
Scale: Tiny(1) – egg, Small(2) - hatchling
Encounter Size: 1-100
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Skills (hatchlings only - eggs have no skills, treat eggs as a swarm)

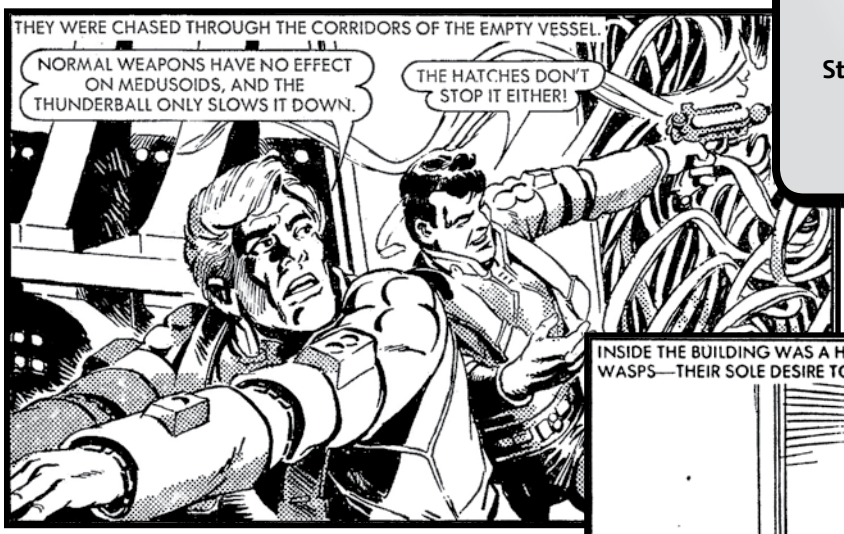
Fair (+2) Fists (Tentacles)
Average (+1) Athletics Alertness

Aspects

Big ball of tentacles
Immune to normal weapons
Snare victims
Vulnerable to radiation

Stunts

Fast [Athletics]
Tentacles [Fists - Special]


THEY WERE CHASED THROUGH THE CORRIDORS OF THE EMPTY VESSEL.
NORMAL WEAPONS HAVE NO EFFECT ON MEDUSOIDS, AND THE THUNDERBALL ONLY SLOWS IT DOWN.
THE HATCHES DON'T STOP IT EITHER!

Piranha Wasps

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐
Fate Points:5 **Scale:** Tiny(1)
Encounter Size: 1-30
Consequences: Up to 3 consequences
Skills

Average (+1) Fists (Tail) Fly Toxic

Aspects

Small but deadly
Taste for humans

Stunts

Flight [Fly]
Tail [Fists - Special]
Toxic weapon- Tail [Toxic]

Piranha Wasps

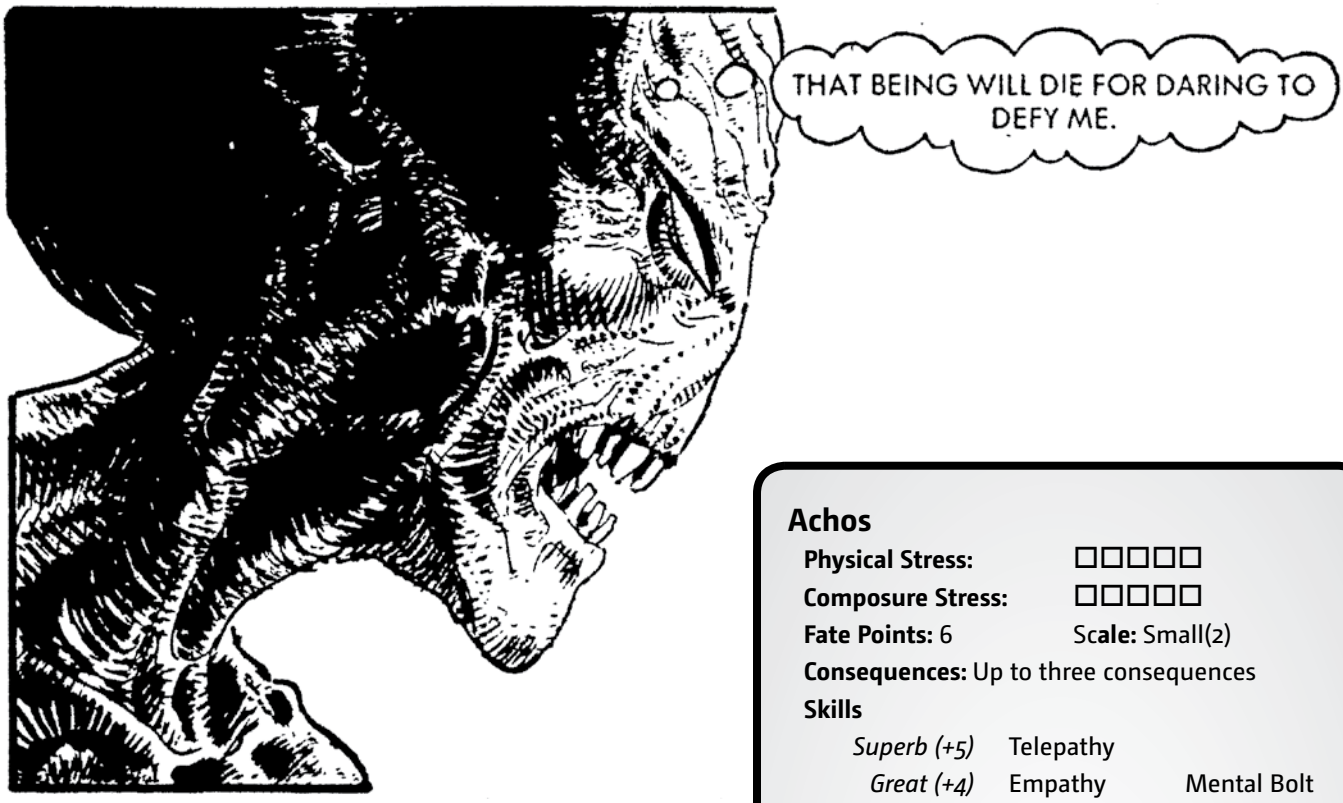
(Issue 69-Nightmare Planet)

The Piranha Wasps are a small lifeform, much bigger than Earth wasps and are extremely deadly and can strip the flesh off a living human in minutes. In a swarm they are even more dangerous. Most planets try to avoid infestations of these creatures and strict customs and quarantine procedures will be put in place in case of an outbreak.

B

VASSAL WAS MAKING PLANS FOR THE CAPTURED GUARDSHIPS FROM ZETA-9, AND HE FOUND BENSON A WILLING ALLY.
THERE'S A SCIENTIFIC COLONY ON RAMA-3. THEY HAVE ALL THE EQUIPMENT WE NEED.
GOOD! AND I WILL SOON PUT IT TO MY OWN USE.

Really Bad Guys



Achos

(Issue 62-Terror Tomb)

A really really nasty alien who killed over half a million humans in a fit of displeasure. Imprisoned by a race known as The Guardians, Achos eventually escaped his imprisonment.

Achos lives for destruction and killing, has mental powers and will do absolutely anything to achieve its aims; there are no boundaries it will not cross.

Achos

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points: 6 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to three consequences

Skills

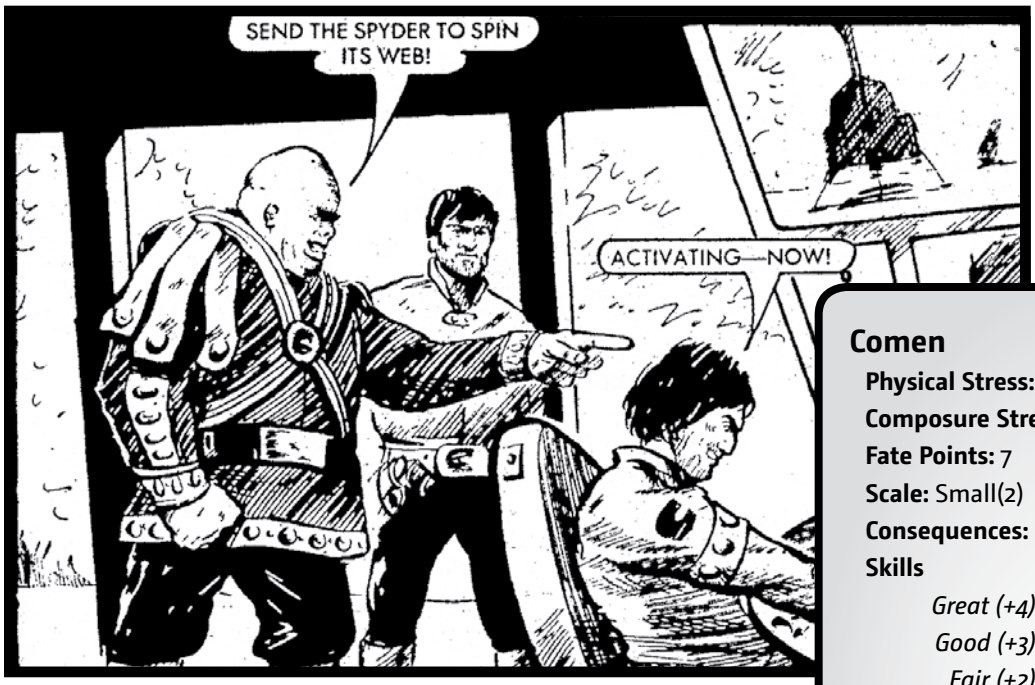
Superb (+5)	Telepathy	
Great (+4)	Empathy	Mental Bolt
Good (+3)	Mind Control	Resolve
	Deceit	
Fair (+2)	Starship Pilot	Starship
	Gunnery	Science
	Intimidation	
Average (+1)	Starship Systems	
	Resources	Fists
	Weapons	Guns

Aspects

- Alien Psychology
- All life-forms are tools
- Evil countenance
- Evil beyond understanding
- Forgotten by history, they'll pay for that
- Live for the kill
- Power corrupts, the more the better
- Ancient Mind Demon
- Minor Weakness - To Energy Weapons
- Minor Weakness - Weak

Stunts

- Clever Facade [Deceit]
- Inner Strength [Resolve]
- Still Standing [Resolve]
- Takes One to Know One [Deceit]



Comen

(Issue 8-Planet of Fear)

Comen is the head of The Comen Mining Syndicate based on the planet Sarana. He is a real dirty tricks specialist who will try anything to get what he wants. He carries local influence and loves playing the bully, conspiring to take more and more power via wealth of rare minerals such as Thyrillium.

Comen

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points: 7
Scale: Small(2)
Consequences: Up to three consequences.
Skills

Great (+4)	Intimidation	
Good (+3)	Resources	Deceit
Fair (+2)	Contacting	Resolve
	Leadership	
Average (+1)	Gambling	Sleight
	of hand	Guns
	Fists	

Aspects

He who runs away, lives to pick another fight
If it isn't nailed down, take it
Inflated ego
Informant network
Local influence

Stunts

Grease the Wheels [Resources]
Minions [Leadership]
Subtle Menace [Intimidation]

Lord Algol (aka Algol the Terrible)

(Issue 15-Algol the Terrible)
Algol is the chief assassin of the Starbarons, an evil immortal race from the planet Abraxis. He has been known to destroy entire cities without care just to eliminate a single individual. Algol also has a personal battlecruiser at his disposal.

Lord Algol (aka Algol the Terrible)

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small (2)
Consequences: Up to 3 Consequences

Skills

Fantastic (+6)	Weapons	
Superb (+5)	Resources	Fists
Great (+4)	Athletics	Resolve
	Endurance	
Good (+3)	Alertness	Stealth
	Guns	Survival
Fair (+2)	Might	Investigation
	Intimidation	Contacting
	Teleportation†	
Average (+1)	Drive	Pilot
	Starship Pilot	Starship Systems
	Science	Academics

Aspects

Backed by the Starbarons
Hard to kill
Immortal
Nuke a city a day to keep the doctor away
Relentless
Superb Assassin
Terrifying presence
Utterly Ruthless
Why come alone when you can bring your own battlecruiser
You can run, and hide, but I'll find you, though it take a hundred years . . .

Stunts

Good Arm [Weapons]
Martial Arts [Fists]
Steel Determination [Resolve]
Tireless [Endurance]
Headquarters (Battlecruiser) [Resources]

Special Equipment

Assault Armour – 3 (don't forget extra Consequences these imbue)
Assault Energy Shield - 3
Grav Belt
Energy Pistol +4
Sonic Javelins‡

† Algol has the ability to teleport himself to anywhere he can visualise or has visited to before. The range of this ability is limited - he can teleport from the surface of a planet to his ship (or anyone else's for that matter) in orbit when it is overhead, but cannot teleport to the other side of the planet.

‡ Sonic Javelins are spears which produce sonic vibrations in their target once hit, causing the target to vibrate itself apart. Provide +2 additional stress on a successful hit and may tag target with a temporary Aspect called 'Disrupted'

Algol has a special gravity belt allowing him to carry heavy loads such as his Sonic Javelins. These negate the Manoeuvre penalties for wearing both the armour and energy shield.

Skaga

(Issue 25-Galactic Shootout)

A notorious pirate leader operating in Terran space, he is typical of the many pirate leaders found throughout the galaxy. Skaga is famous for stealing a rare source of incredible power, a Zillium Crystal.

Skaga

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points: 6 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences : Up to three Consequences

Skills

Superb(+5)	Resources	
Great (+4)	Intimidation	
	Leadership	
Good (+3)	Starship Piloting	
	Gambling	Starship Gunnery
Fair (+2)	Sleight of Hand	Guns
	Burglary	Deceit
Average (+1)	Starship Systems	Pilot
	Weapons	Drive
	Fists	

Aspects

He who runs away, lives to pick another fight
If it isn't nailed down, take it
Inflated ego
Informant network
Local influence
Loyal crew
Sneaky git

Stunts

Know When to Fold 'Em [Gambling]
Minions [Leadership]
Reinforcements [Leadership]
Unapproachable [Intimidation]

Slarn

(Issue 32-The Machine Masters)

Although this is a race rather than a "Really Bad Guy", we count Slarn as such as they are potentially so powerful and are always encountered as singles. The Slarn are a malicious intelligent race. In appearance, they can be likened to a head on eight legs, similar to a spider (but uglier). They feed off any form of energy, siphoning energy by touch. Their main strength is the ability to interface with and gain control of any computerised system, from basic door panels up to entire Starships. They multiply by absorbing vast amounts of energy (plugging themselves into the power source for a Starship of scale Huge (5) would suffice). They are solitary creatures and are never encountered in groups; most of them were wiped out by a race called the Corbs. At their height of power, Slarn would pilot powerful giant war droids. No-one has encountered a Slarn for some time but there are many planets they ruled over still to be rediscovered.

Slarn

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points: 4 Scale: Tiny(1)
Consequences: Up to three Consequences

Skills

Great (+4)	Interface Domination †	
Good (+3)	Stealth	Energy Drain‡
Fair (+2)	Intimidation	Science
	Fists (Claws)	
Average (+1)	Athletics	Survival
	Burglary	Alertness

Aspects

Interface to anything electrical
Old race, nearly exterminated by the Corb
Always slinking away
Vulnerable to weapons (of any kind)

Stunts

Quick Exit [Stealth]
Light Foot [Stealth]
Energy Drain [Absorb Energy]
Human Spider [Athletics]
Spider Feet [Athletics]
Small [Stealth]

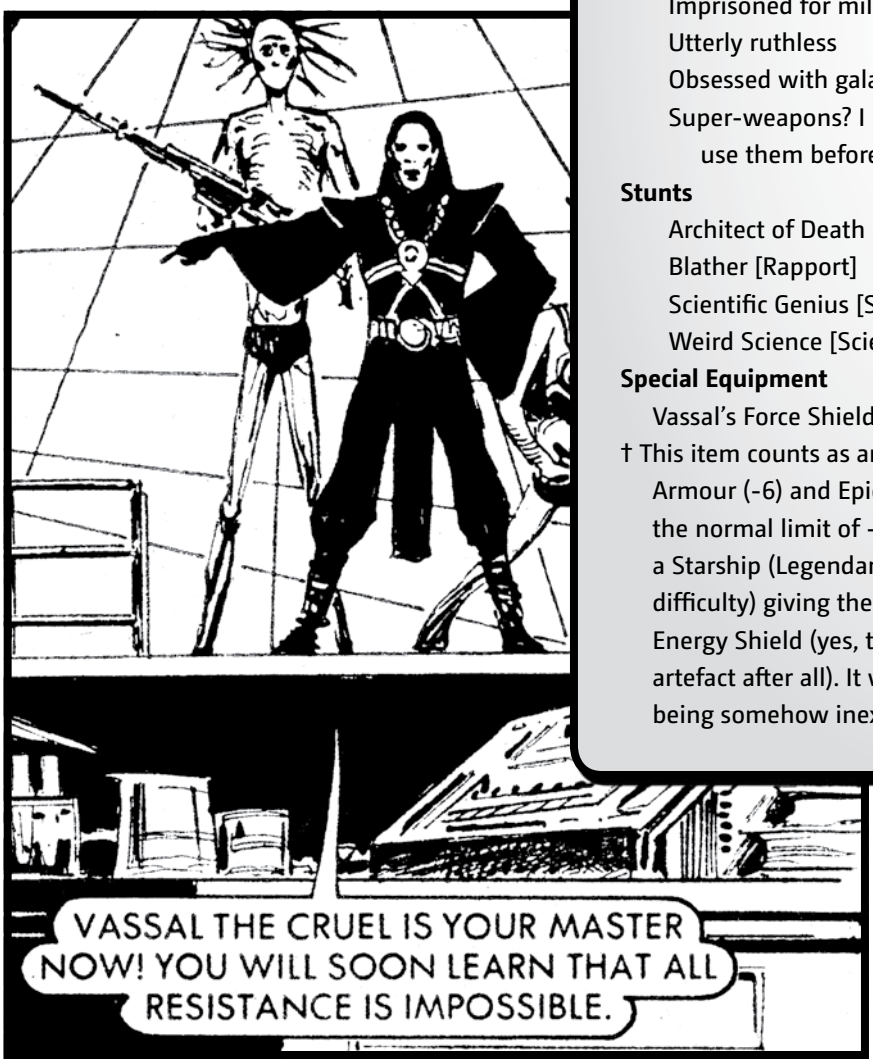
† Special skill unique to Slarn. Natural ability to interface with, hack, and take control of any electronic or electrical system, including computers, control systems, etc. It can also reverse energy flows, turning control panels into lethal traps for the unwary.

‡ For the Slarn, this skill also heals as Life Drain does for other life-forms.

Vassal

(aka Vassal the Cruel)

(Issue 7-Holocaust Hogan)
Vassal is an evil warlord dictator from a distant galaxy. Responsible for killing millions, he was imprisoned inside a dead planet by a race of mutants known as The Protectors until released by a pirate prospector. Extremely intelligent, he is adept at persuading others to his cause and is capable of designing and building super-weapons. All he really cares about is power and domination over whichever galaxy he happens to be in. He is human-like in appearance but is seven feet tall and resembles a vampire of Terran legend.



Vassal (aka Vassal the Cruel)

Physical Stress: □□□□□
Composure Stress: □□□□□
Fate Points: 4 **Scale:** Small (2)
Consequences: Up to three Consequences.

Skills

Fantastic (+6)	Rapport		
Superb (+5)	Science	Engineering	
Great (+4)	Intimidation	Guns	Resolve
Good (+3)	Starship Engineer	Empathy	
	Starship Systems	Deceit	
Fair (+2)	Endurance	Guns	
	Exude Energy	Fists	Mysteries
Average (+1)	Alertness	Athletics	
	Investigation	Survival	
	Weapons	Might	

Aspects

Ancient knowledge	Evil and merciless
Feared by the ancient races	Travelled the Universe
Imprisoned for millennia	Others are disposable tools
Utterly ruthless	Minor Weakness to Water
Obsessed with galactic domination	
Super-weapons? I create them before breakfast, use them before lunch	

Stunts

Architect of Death [Engineering]	
Blather [Rapport]	Mad Science [Science]
Scientific Genius [Science]	The Right Questions [Rapport]
Weird Science [Science]	Supermind [Science]

Special Equipment

Vassal's Force Shield Belt† Photon Pistol +2

† This item counts as an artefact and acts as both Epic Assault Armour (-6) and Epic Assault Energy Shield (-6) (yes, it breaks the normal limit of -3). In addition, it can be connected to a Starship (Legendary Engineering / Starship Engineering difficulty) giving the Starship the equivalent of an Superb(+5) Energy Shield (yes, that breaks the rules as well, it is an artefact after all). It will of course destroy itself as Vassal dies being somehow inextricably linked to his lifeforce.

THE SHIPEATER
A LARGE FREIGHTER DRIFTED SILENTLY IN THE VASTNESS OF SPACE, DEBRIS TRAILING WEIGHTLESSLY BEHIND IT.

Giant Space Creatures

Arcon

(Issue 12-The Web of Arcon)

The Arcon is a very large "space spider" that looks more like an octopus, having eight tentacles, two of which end with giant claws. Their origin is a mystery despite being found in interstellar space, and nearly always on their own. Like a spider, they lay huge nets of web-like fibres which they use to entrap unwary Starships. They feed off energy and drain all forms of energy upon touch - if they wrap a tentacle around a ship, it will quickly drain all energy sources on board - they have an acute sense of energy including items such as batteries and energy cells and will peel a Starship apart to get to them. They are completely immune to all forms of energy attack but are vulnerable to sharp bladed (edged) weapons.

The Arcon has been produced as a 'Core Boss Threat' meaning there is one key body part controlling many small groups of minions.

Arcon

Scale: Enormous (6) **Fate Points**: 7

The Body:

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐

Composure Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐

Consequences: Up to three consequences.

Weak Spot: Head

10 Tentacles as Minions

Group of 4 Minions

Average (+1) Tentacle ☐

Average (+1) Tentacle ☐

Average (+1) Tentacle ☐

Average (+1) Tentacle ☐

Group of 3 Minions

Fair (+2) Tentacle ☐☐

Fair (+2) Tentacle ☐☐

Fair (+2) Tentacle ☐☐

Group of 2 Minions

Good (+3) Tentacle ☐☐☐

Good (+3) Tentacle ☐☐☐

Aspects

Hard to kill

Oversized brain

Primitive instincts

Quick to enrage

Sensitive to energy sources

Major Weakness to Fire

Major Weakness to edged weapons

Design Note: Tentacle Stunts are not required for the Arcon as its Tentacles are Minions. Only use Tentacle Stunts to replace limbs with creatures not created using the rules in the Star Monsters & War Machines chapter.

Skills

Superb: Absorb Energy,

Great: Unusual Attack (Bite)
Alertness

Good: Web Spinner † Fists (Tentacle)
Fists (Tentacle)

Fair: Hardened Structure
Fists (Tentacle) Fists (Tentacle)
Fists (Tentacle)

Average: Manoeuvre Fists (Tentacle)
Fists (Tentacle) Fists (Tentacle)
Fists (Tentacle)

Stunts

Absorb Radiation [Absorb Energy]

Energy Drain [Absorb Energy]

Absorb Light [Absorb Energy]

Monstrous Special Abilities

Immune: Energy Weapons

Unusual Attack (Bite) Great +4

Super Regeneration *

† The Arcon' Web Spinning Skill is used as an attack anytime a ship or individual comes in to contact with the web. The attack is versus a target ship's Manoeuvre and a target creature's Athletics. If successful the web has stuck to the target and it is held fast.

* The Arcon has unusually fast regeneration (treat as per the mutant/alien Regeneration special ability but regaining 5 stress per round (up to its maximum) instead of the usual 1 stress.

Drawn

(Issue 5-The Shipeater)

The Drawn is a massive space faring creature developed and bred by a Terran scientist called Bovis, designed to be nuclear dustbins feeding off radioactive waste. They escaped from the labs they were developed in and now roam space, attacking and feeding off the radioactive sources found in Starship reactor cores (or if they are lucky enough to come across a freighter carrying nuclear waste, these are considered a delicacy). They also absorb energy and projectile weapons but are vulnerable to positron lasers (a very rare experimental class of beam weapon). Drawn have three weapons "systems"—its tail, claws (up to four depending on age and size) and its bite, all of which are capable of peeling a Starship like an orange. The claws can also be used to seize ships, each claw counting as a Grappling System (see page 316). The Drawn grows in size as it consumes radiation and ages so its scale will depend on its age and the number of ships it has eaten.

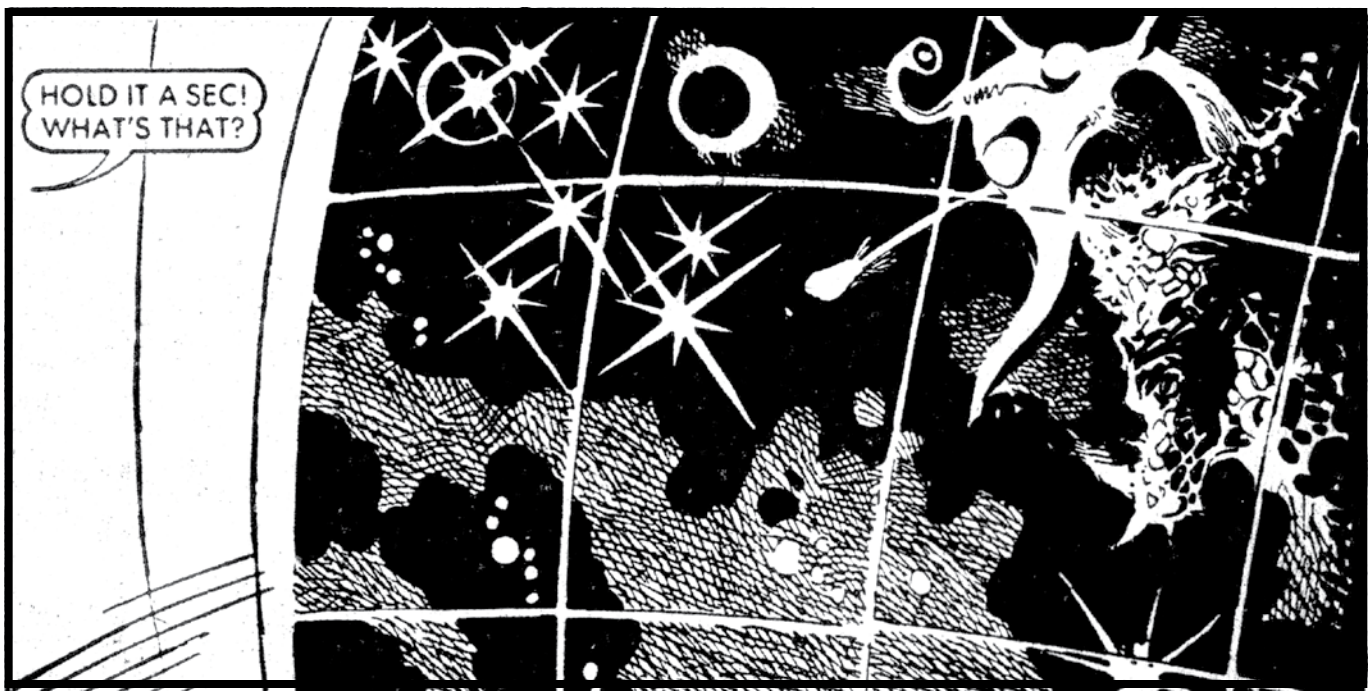
Since newborns and juveniles are not able to travel FTL, where found, an adult is usually close by. There are rumours among deep space explorers of a Planetary (8) scale Drawn lurking in intergalactic space. If encountered, taking on this gargantuan creature should constitute a small campaign in its own right. The Story Teller can extrapolate the above table and apply the serious threat guidelines to create such a Drawn (see Star Monsters & War Machines).

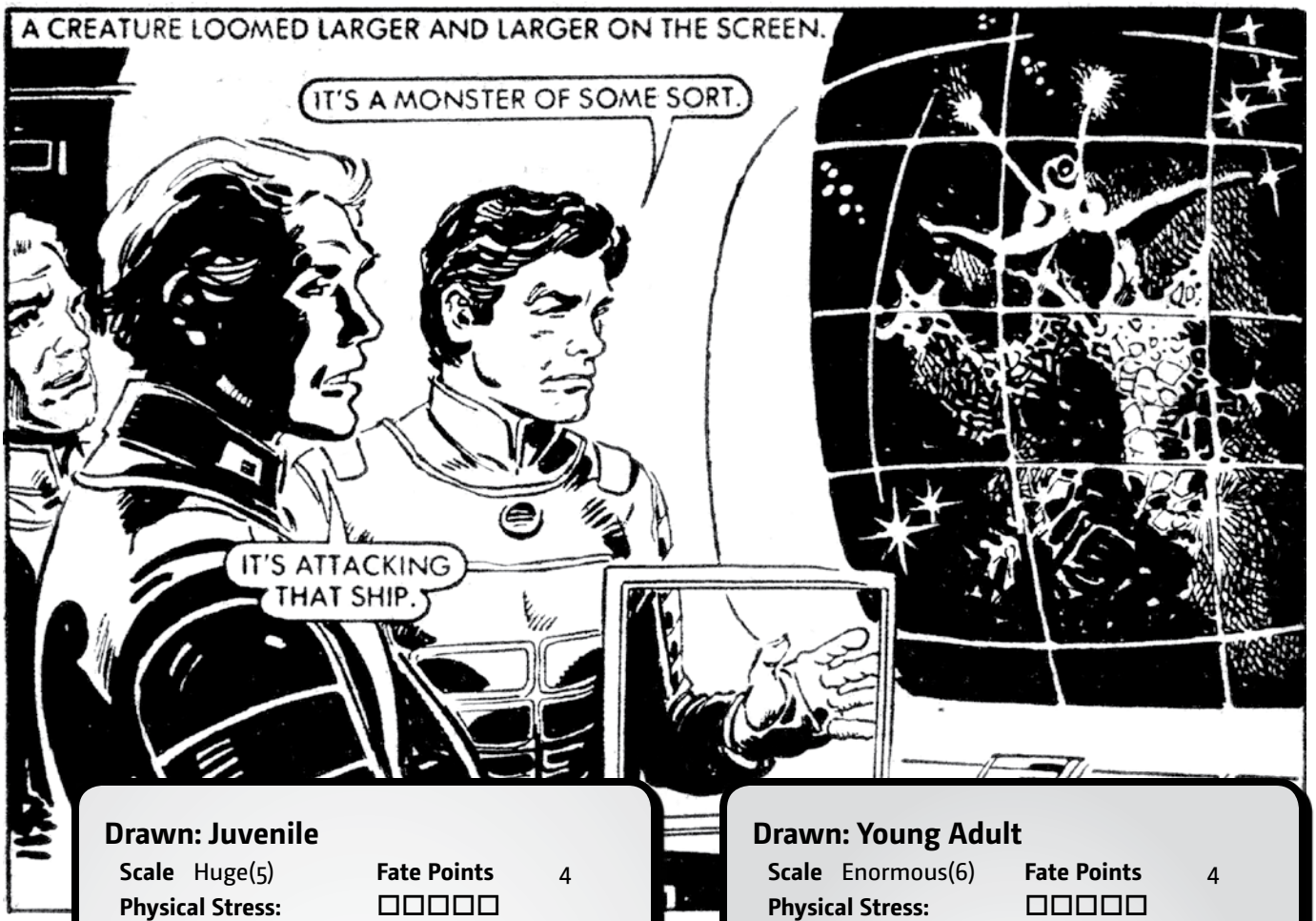
Drawn: Newborn

Scale Large(4) **Fate Points** 4
Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Structural Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Consequences: Up to three Consequences
Monstrous Abilities
Unusual Attack (Jaws)
Body Attack
Skills

Good	Unusual Attack - Fists (Jaws)	
Fair	Absorb Energy	Exude Energy
Average	Fists (Claws)	Fists (Claws)
	Manoeuvre	

Stunts
Radiation [Exude Energy]
Absorb Energy Weapons [Absorb Energy]
Absorb Kinetic Weapons [Absorb Energy]
Energy Drain [Absorb Energy]
Jaws [Fists]
Claws [Fists]
Aspects
I sure hope mother's not around
Primitive instincts
Sensitive to radioactive sources
Sudden Burst of speed
Weaknesses
Major Weakness to Positron Lasers
Weakness to gravity sources





Drawn: Juvenile

Scale Huge(5) **Fate Points** 4
Physical Stress: □□□□□
Structural Stress: □□□□□□
Consequences: Up to three Consequences
Monstrous Abilities
Same as newborn!
Skills

Good	Unusual Attack - Fists (Jaws)
	Absorb Energy
Fair	Fists (Claws) Fists (Claws)
	Exude Energy
Average	Manoeuvre
	Natural Sensor Suite
	Ablative Armour
	Hardened Structure

Stunts
Same as newborn!
Aspects
Same as newborn, plus:
Peel a Starship like an orange
Weaknesses
Same as newborn!

Drawn: Young Adult

Scale Enormous(6) **Fate Points** 4
Physical Stress: □□□□□
Structural Stress: □□□□□
Consequences: Up to three Consequences
Monstrous Abilities
Same as newborn!
Skills

Great	Absorb Energy
Good	Unusual Attack - Fists (Jaws)
	Exude Energy
Fair	Fists (Claws) Fists (Claws)
	Natural Cloaking System
Average	Manoeuvre
	Natural Sensor Suite
	Ablative Armour
	Hardened Structure

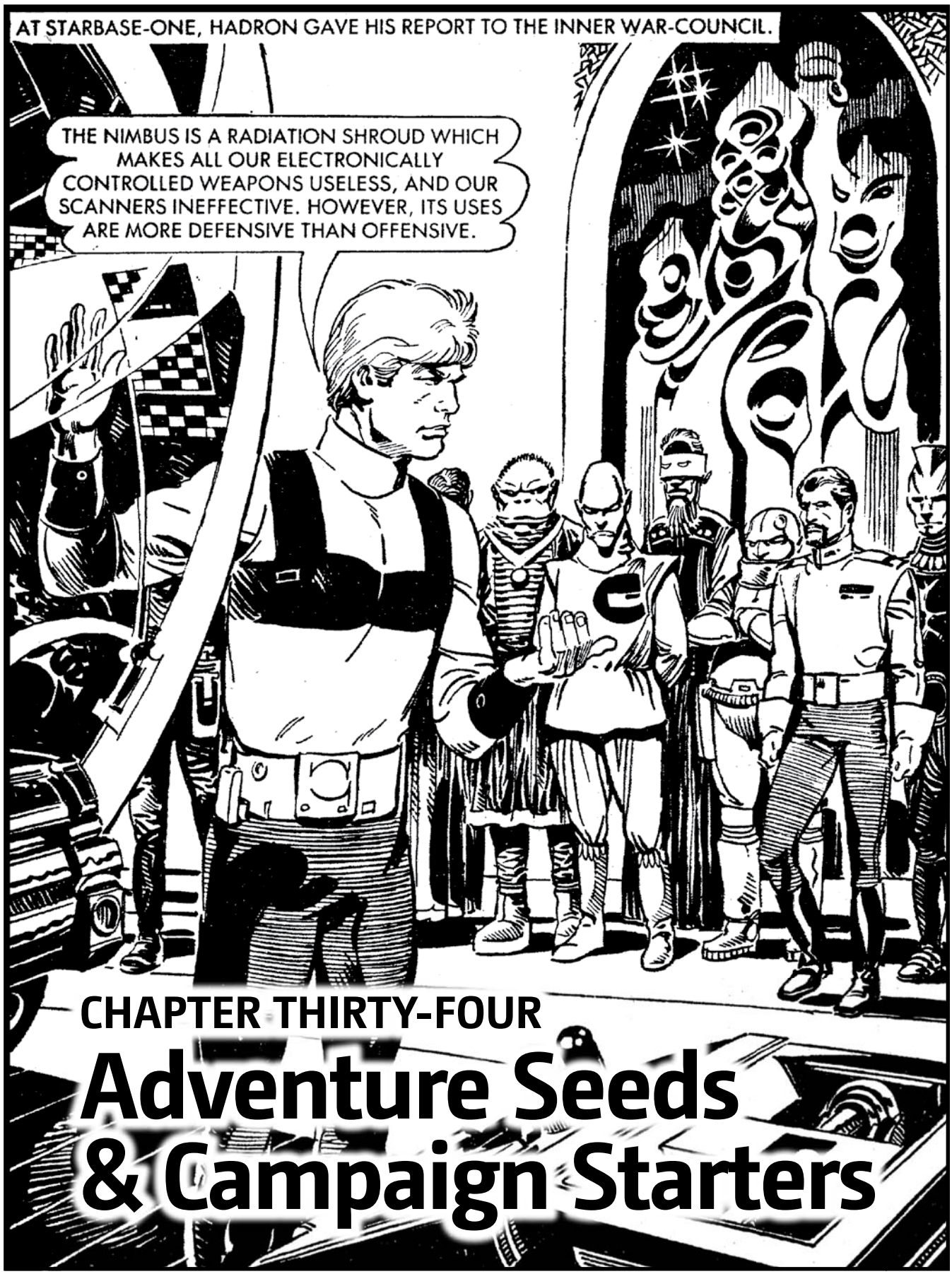
Stunts
Same as newborn!
Aspects
Same as juvenile, plus:
Explosive death throes
Weaknesses
Same as newborn!

Drawn: Adult

Scale Colossal(7) **Fate Points** 4
Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Structural Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Consequences: Up to three Consequences
Monstrous Abilities
Same as newborn!
Skills

Superb	Unthinkable Attack - Fists (Jaws)	
Great	Absorb Energy	
	Exude Energy	
Good	Fists (Claws)	Fists (Claws)
	Natural Cloaking System	
Fair	Hardened Structure	
	Ablative Armour	
	Natural Sensor Suite	
Average	Manoeuvre	
	Natural Stardrive	
	Fists (Back Claws)	
	Fists (Back Claws)	
	Fists (Tail)	

Stunts
Same as newborn!
Aspects
Same as young adult, plus:
The Claw!
Weaknesses
Same as newborn!


AT STARBASE-ONE, HADRON GAVE HIS REPORT TO THE INNER WAR-COUNCIL.
THE NIMBUS IS A RADIATION SHROUD WHICH MAKES ALL OUR ELECTRONICALLY CONTROLLED WEAPONS USELESS, AND OUR SCANNERS INEFFECTIVE. HOWEVER, ITS USES ARE MORE DEFENSIVE THAN OFFENSIVE.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

Adventure Seeds & Campaign Starters

Adventure Seeds & Campaign Starters

In addition to the list of Starblazer Legends in chapter 30 (summaries of stories from some of the classic issues) this chapter includes an introductory adventure and ideas to get you started. Keep an eye on the official website www.starblazeradventures.com for more adventures and supplements.

You could also use the ideas here as inspiration for the Collaborative Campaign Creation system in Chapter 23 or use either of the plot generator's in Chapter 26 to help flesh out a story.

In Appendix 5 you also find a number of maps which you could use within the adventure seeds. They include a small and large Starport, alien ruins, a strange alien installation, cutaway of a large Starship and an asteroid base. These aren't meant to be used to record turn by turn movements, they're there to help you tell a story.

Introductory Adventure

Here is a simple adventure to get you started and we'll be posting more on the website– they're designed for people who might be new to the game but they're equally fun for those who have played role playing games before. First let's look at some guidelines to starting things off with new players.

Creating Characters & Running the Game

We recommend you use the 'jump straight in' method of creating characters, where players start with a blank character sheet and no details whatsoever (see page 28).

If you want to get playing quickly, see Chapter 2 for introductory rules on running the game, this will get you by for the moment.

Starting the game

To start with ask each player to think of a name for their character and write that down on their character sheet.

Now ask each player to think about something positive about the character played by the person to their left. Explain that characters can pay a Fate point to get a bonus during the game if their Aspect is relevant to a situation, so ideally positive Aspects should be useful descriptions related to heroic space opera characters. For example they could be 'Brainy', 'good in a fight', 'hot as hell', 'quick reactions', 'best engineer in the quadrant', 'good with a laser'. Each player should write the Aspect that the player to their right chose for them down on their character sheet under Aspects. Tell them these can be changed later in the game, they shouldn't worry too much about them just now.

Next ask each player to describe a negative Aspect about the player's character to their right. Tell the players that this should be something cool, that each player's character will get rewarded if the negative Aspect gets used against them. Again write the negative Aspect chosen for each character on their respective character sheet. For example these could be 'clumsy oaf', 'can't tell which end shoots', 'indecisive when under pressure', 'tactless idiot'. Again they can be changed later on so don't let them spend too long worrying about it.

Lastly give each player ten Fate points.

Adding Skills

Without a Skill a character is Mediocre (+0) at doing everything. That means they roll the dice and use that as the result on any Skill checks. However they'll soon want to improve the odds and every character can choose to add Skills at any opportunity up to a maximum of 6 Skills during the first session – one Good (+3) Skill, two at Fair (+2) and three at Average (+1). It's enough for this short adventure and if you want to you can carry on using the characters and let the players add Skills after the adventure to bring them up to whatever level of campaign you would like (see page 31).

When a player says she wants to add a Skill to her character just write it down on the character sheet under the correct Skill level, such as Average, Fair or Good.

So now when a character tries something related to that Skill they now get the roll of the dice plus the Skill bonus (between +1 and +3). It's probably a good idea to keep the rules summary sheet handy so players can see the list of Skills available.

Stunts

Stunts are not used in this introductory game.

Changing Skills or Aspects!

As players learn what Skills are useful and what type of character they want to play they may realise the Skill they're using more often is not powerful enough or they may feel their positive or negative Aspects are not being used.

During pauses in the game action ask the players which Skills their character is using more or would like to use more, and ask them if they want to swap the Skills around. For example say a character had chosen Guns +2 and Science +3 as that was the last Skill they chose to add. However they're using Guns more than Science. Simple swap both Skills around on the sheet (it's probably a good idea to use pencils for the first session!). So Science becomes +2 and Guns becomes +3. For now we'll ignore the rule that Skills should only be swapped if they're next to each other – in the first session its likely players will put Skills in the wrong place.

If they really don't like a Skill they chose and they have no more spaces for new Skills, then Average +1 Skills can be swapped for a new Skill. Basically they're swapping it for a Mediocre (+0) Skill.

They player can also elect to change their positive or negative Aspect during a pause. It's best to discuss this briefly with the group or the player, make sure it's something they will be able to use for their benefit (or in the case of a negative Aspect something that is likely to be compelled and so reward them).

Taking Consequences

If a character takes a Consequence ask them to write down on their character sheet how it happened, are they badly burnt, shaken, bruised, severely cut or bleeding? Get them to think about what the Consequence actually was based on how severe it was and how they received it.

Remember a Minor consequence absorbs 2 Stress, a Major 4, a Severe 6 and an Extreme 8 Stress

If a character dies, don't worry, just start the player as another one of the passengers, the threat of death at the hands of the Shapechanger should be very real and as people die it will become clear the characters have to take action soon.

Spending and receiving Fate points

The players each have ten Fate points they can use, and they can gain more by having their negative Aspects compelled. A player can spend a Fate point to add +1 to the roll of the dice, or to Invoke an appropriate positive Aspect belonging to their character or the scene. This then lets them re-roll the dice, or add +2 to the total effort. See Chapter 2 for more info on using Fate points.

The Shapechangers of Charon

Journeys of the HMS Traveller

In this adventure the players are colonists who are passengers on route aboard the Starship HMS *Traveller*, and must help the crew deal with a dangerous alien threat aboard ship. This is designed to be a fun introduction to ***Starblazer Adventures*** for a small group of players.

The Adventure

The characters are all passengers aboard the HMS *Traveller*, a naval exploration ship en route from Earth to Gallery Station in the Serpentine System. None of the characters know each other and they are all on their way to live in various new colonies in the Serpentine System (which will explain why they have various useful Skills but none of them are too powerful).

The HMS Traveller is helping deliver vital supplies to Gallery Station, however Naval Intelligence is using the cover of passengers to send a special agent to check up on the discovery of strange alien ruins on the planet Serpentine IV. There's a crew of 6 and twice as many passengers as there are players. The crew consists of the Captain, Pilot, Science officer, Engineer and two general crewmen responsible for general shipboard duties such as cooking, cleaning, repairs, operating weapons, etc.

The journey is approximately a day of travel time, but the warp drive cuts out mid route leaving the ship stranded. The usual distress call is sent out by the Captain but soon after, the shipboard power cut is cut, plunging the ship in to darkness.

Warning sirens are honking away as the crew scramble around to find the source of the power cut. Finally the sirens are silenced but just in time to allow everyone to hear someone's agonising screams. The Engineer is found dead in the Drive room.

Despite an extensive search and shipboard scan no other signs of life are found, and the crew and passengers fear that help may come too late for the HMS *Traveller*.

Big Picture Plot

This 'big picture' plot is provided for Story Tellers who would like to extend this adventure in to a campaign.

Serenity Investments, the company in charge of the settlement of Serpentine IV has unearthed some very strange alien ruins. Oddly enough the managing agent for Serenity Investments decides not to report the ruins, as is standard practice, to Star Patrol. In fact they awoke a malignant evil, long thought gone from the galaxy. The Shapechangers of Charon were nearly all killed hundreds of years ago but for a few that escaped to Serpentine IV and built a secret installation to keep them asleep until the danger had passed. The corporation accidentally awakened their powerful leader and he is gradually awakening other's of his kind in secret. He has replaced the managing agent and the rest of the key staff on the world are slowly being replaced by Shapechangers.

Shapechanger are creatures that mimic other life and are vicious parasites feeding on the lifeforce of beings around them. They were nearly hunted to extinction by the Law Lords of the late 31st Century after the Federation was forced to destroy three whole worlds to stop their relentless advance.

Adventure Plot

One of the Shapechangers travelled to Earth under the guise of a merchant looking for supplies in order to assess the threat from the humans. On its way back to Serpentine IV the Shapechanger discovers the presence of the Star Patrol agent who has been sent to check into the ruins and decides to replace him. First he disables the ships drive and kills the Engineer to give him time to replace the agent. Now he will attempt to replace Matt Tayn. Matt will enlist the help of the players and surviving crew in tracking the creature down (once they realise what it is). This will require some research and discussion with the crew who may have heard of the legends of the Shapechangers of Charon.

Meanwhile assume that every day and every night someone is replaced and their body could be found somewhere aboard ship. By the time the body is found though, it is likely that the Shapechanger has

replaced another character and the real crew and passenger's numbers are dwindling.

Here are some scenes to include;

- Searching lonely corridors of the ship and hearings sounds nearby (the Shapechanger moving through a maintenance duct).
- Arguing in the dining area about who is the Shapechanger and how to detect them (before discovering their weakness).
- Finding things missing or personal belongings rifled through
- Whilst in a lonely room the lights go out in the corridor beyond, should they venture back or wait it out?
- The sound of someone walking on the outside of the ship, where is everyone?
- Finding someone's body who they just passed in the corridor
- Hurriedly conducting research in to the Shapechangers, fearing it is nearby or even someone else in the room
- Equipment being sabotaged such as communications, sensor arrays or the ships' computer to hinder the rescue, search or research efforts.
- Crew or officers acting oddly because they have been taken over, perhaps the Captain ordering all the passengers to be locked in the brig 'for their own safety'.

In a final showdown the characters should discover the Shapechangers weakness to fire and arrange an elaborate trap to lure it to its death. Perhaps an explosion in an area of the ship, or equipping everyone with improvised flame throwers.

Assuming they succeed, the HMS Sheffield, a frigate, will arrive to rescue the characters and repair the stricken HMS Traveller, although the characters will undergo quarantine to ensure there are no more Shapechangers aboard.

Typical Shapechanger

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
System Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐
Fate Points: 5 **Scale:** Small(2)
Consequences: Up to 3 (Minor, Major, Severe, Extreme)
Skills

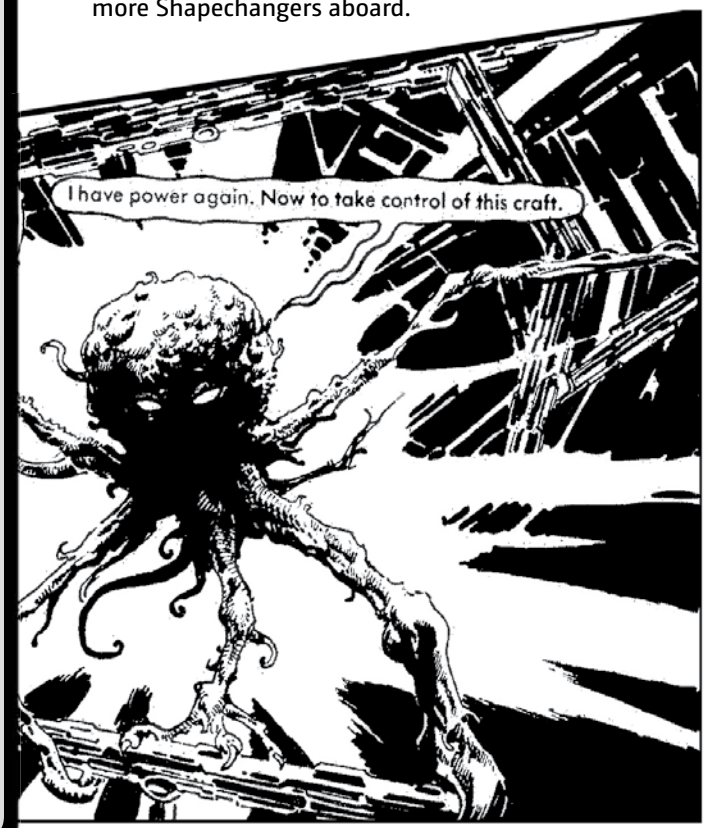
Great (+4)	Mimic
Good (+3)	Stealth, Rapport
Fair (+2)	Alertness, Fists, Might
Average (+1)	Weapons, Athletics, Science, Empathy

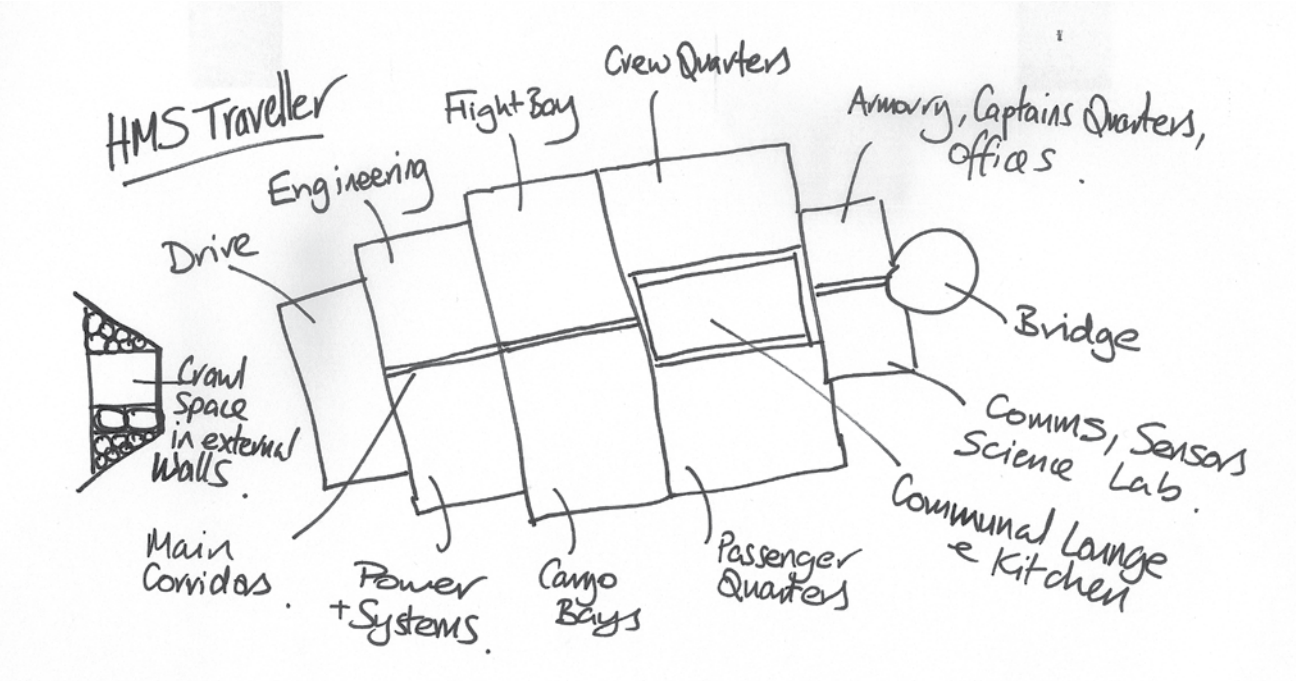
Aspects

Nothing can stop us!
Aii!! The fire hurts!
I know everything you know!

Major Weakness: Fire. The creature will take an automatic Consequence for each turn in contact with an open flame covering or touching at least one whole limb. This weakness to fire was never confirmed by sources at the time and so it should be a Superb (+5) Academics task to research if the players say they are going to look for weaknesses.

Mimic Ability: See Chapter 14 for more information on the Mimic Skill, The creature uses its Rapport Skill to get intimate with a member of the opposite sex (of the character it is mimicking) or Stealth to creep up on them and then Might or Fists to kill them. Once the Shapechanger has killed a target it changes in to its clothes and completes the physical change to look like its target. The Aspect 'I know everything you know' can be used by the Shapechanger to use information the target might have known to aid it – for example knowing how to pilot a ship, know who to recognise as its friends, etc.





The HMS Traveller

The ship is reasonably extensive for the size of crew it carries, it has a science lab, communication and sensor module, extensive cargo bays, flight bay for a pair of atmospheric capable shuttles, a couple of beam weapon turrets, passenger & crew quarters, communal areas (lounge, kitchen & dining area), bridge, engineering deck full of pipes and tight spaces and of course plenty of corridors connecting everything together. We can also assume there's a maze of ducts that seem to be designed for things to hide in, and innocents to die horribly in.

We've included one of the passenger's sketched maps of the ship for purposes of telling the story and allowing players to explain where their characters are and what they are doing.

Crew and Passengers

For purposes of game rules assume all the ship's officers have Average (+1) Skills except where noted next to their names. All crew and officers can take an equal amount of Consequences to the players but have no Aspects or Fate points.

Mat Tayn

Star Patrol Special Operations

Aspects

Quick draw Tayn (positive)

Afraid of confined spaces (negative)

Fate points: 3

Skills

Good (+3)	Guns
Fair (+2)	Investigation, Weapons
Average (+1)	Stealth, Alertness, Athletics

Consequences: Up to three just like the players.

Equipment

Mat has a Hand Gun (+2) which inflicts an additional 2 stress on a successful hit.

The Crew

Captain Peter Brookstar

Leadership Good (+3).

Pilot Adron Tale

Starship Pilot Fair (+2), Guns Fair (+2).

Engineer Davy McGarrit

Starship Engineer Fair (+2).

Science Officer Jane Devine

Starship Systems Fair (+2).

Crewman Sandra Brock

Starship Gunnery & Starship Systems at Average (+1). All others Mediocre.

Crewman Anton Jones

Starship Gunnery & Starship Systems at Average (+1). All others Mediocre.

The crew have access to a weapons locker containing 6 x +2 Hand Guns, 3 x +3 Auto Rifles and 6 x +1 Blades. The locker is code sealed and can only be opened by the Captain or two other officers. If the Captain is taken over by the Shapechanger the characters should expect to find the weapons missing or destroyed. The locker can not be opened with improvised weapons and to use tools on board the ship is a Fantastic (+6) difficulty assuming the characters have found the right tools aboard ship.

Choose some names for passengers, remember you need twice as many as you have players and assume it's a fifty-fifty split of male to females. All the other passengers except for the secret agent are Mediocre level at all Skills and do not have Starship Skills at all.

The secret agent is a guy called Matt Tayn working for Star Patrol. Matt's a good guy, he's been sent to check out the alien ruins unobtrusively as it's odd that the corporation in charge of the planet's settlement hasn't declared them. Star Patrol only found out through a leak from a merchant working in the system who heard a rumour of some ruins.

Weapons aboard Ship

Firing a projectile weapon on board a ship can be dangerous, when attacking if the dice roll a total of -5, the bullet pierces something vital, alarms sound and depressurisation doors begin to close. All characters in that zone have to make a Good (+3) difficulty Athletics check or be stuck inside the depressurising area.

They then have to make another Good (+3) difficulty Athletics check to reach a spacesuit and get it on in time. For each turn they fail this Athletics check, they must take a Consequence starting with Minor, then Major, then Severe, then Extreme and finally they would be taken out and, well, dead!

Adventure Seeds

Have a look at these adventure seeds to get you thinking. Try using the random plot generator or Adventure Funnel to flesh them out.

- Unpeel the layers of conspiracy around the Ring of Thieves, an inter-galactic slavery ring which seems to grow with each layer uncovered. Who or what will the characters find at the centre?
- Assigned as the diplomat to New Moscow, organise a successful party to meet the movers and shakers you need to know, secure the release of a political prisoner, sign a beneficial trade agreement and get an agent off planet safely.
- Root out a Pirate organisation's secret base by subterfuge (getting hired as pirates) or investigation and then assault
- Explore an ancient Star Relic recently discovered in a strange system
- Raid an alien weapon facility and steal its plans during an all out war
- Land at an alien Starport, rescue an admiral, and escape
- Explore some recently discovered ancient alien ruins
- Find the famed Sargasso Star Field cluttered with ancient Starship wrecks and secure enough resources to pay off the debt on your ship before some very nasty debt collectors catch up with you, or did they already?
- Track down a rogue Mandroid for Star Patrol only to discover he's a cop who's been set up – but by who?
- What's wrong with the crew of the Starship Gettysburg? Earth's greatest battleship is out of control and headed out in to space!
- Crash landed on a lost world, what will the characters discover in the jungle around their ship, in the strange shaped hills to the east?
- Shot down in a deadly battle over a strange world, the crew find themselves in the ruins of a once great city – vast towers and raised roadways soar across the city. What secrets does it hide and what are the desperate messages they find?
- Marooned when their ship's engines fail, the characters find themselves in the ghostly wreckage of an ancient Starship battleground. They are not the only ones alive though and whilst there is a lot to discover, danger is around every corner. Will they discover the means to escape?
- Hired to find a mutant and his cut throat gang of thugs the characters must trawl the deadliest parts of the city for clues as to their whereabouts. What secrets do they discover about the mysterious woman who hired them

Organisation Adventure Seeds

If the characters are leading an army, a rebellion, a corporation or a small star empire here's some ideas

to develop

- Build a rebellion from village to city, outpost to spacestation, plan guerrilla warfare on the corrupt government and avoid their security services
- Can the company secure the rights to mine in the lucrative Amion Belt, defend itself from pirates, deal with the local organised crime and maintain relations with the pompous self styled King of the nearest world
- An on-going war is sapping the empire of strength, if new resources aren't found a rebellion at home could leave the government wide open to defeat
- The Star Patrol outpost has been infiltrated by alien agents. Neutralise them and then infiltrate their base, plan an attack and lead the marines in an all out assault.

Star Relics

Star Relics are built by ancient races & mysterious beings, rogue scientific geniuses and their robot minions. Ancient galactic scale objects are perfect locales for enormous Starblazer Legends and whole campaigns can be set in and around them.

Here are some examples;

- Galactic Engineering such as artificial patterns of worlds or stars designed to be seen from right across the universe. They could be galactic sign posts, extravagant sculptures, solutions to truly epic scale population growth or enormous weapons built to destroy an ancient enemy.
- Artificial Worlds include Dyson Spheres (massive sphere's enclosing a star with the living space of millions of worlds on the inside surface), Ringworlds (a ribbon of living space circling a star or artificial sun, still with vast amounts of living space), O'Neil cylinders (tubular artificial worlds with the inhabitants living on the inside) and Orbitals (smaller ringworlds in orbit around a star. These and others like them should be big enough to instil fear or awe in cultures who have yet discovered the advanced science needed to engineer them
- Ancient Heritage – storehouses of knowledge (perhaps forbidden), weapons, Starships (mothballed whole fleets) technology or the race itself in suspended animation.

- Superweapons & Ships – Planet size death machines, gigantic spaceships that literally chew their way through fleets, bio-engineered creatures whose purpose is long lost, hidden and long lost automated attack systems bent on continuing a millennia old war, massive Starships hundreds of miles long with unimaginable power way in advance of all known technology and full of mysteries.

Star Relic Adventure Seeds

- Is it an ancient weapon that wasn't completed in time, is the enemy still around?
- Was it a hiding place that failed?
- What happened to the inhabitants?
- Can the characters save it from destruction?
- Can the characters stop it from destroying their world?
- Why has it suddenly become active
- No one can get aboard but it is believed it is long dead, or is it?

A note on Star Relic technology – is it familiar to the player's culture, or is it inexplicably alien? It could be so advanced that even to an advanced culture it

B

APPENDIX ONE

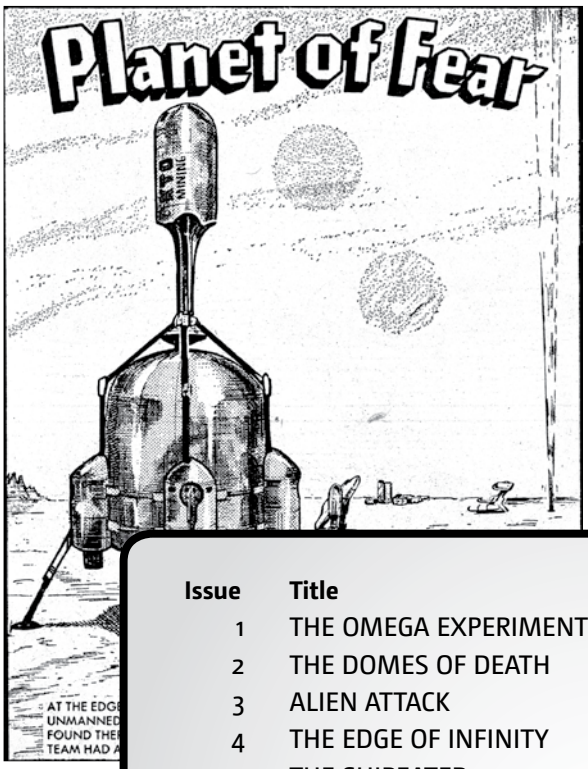
Starblazer Issues

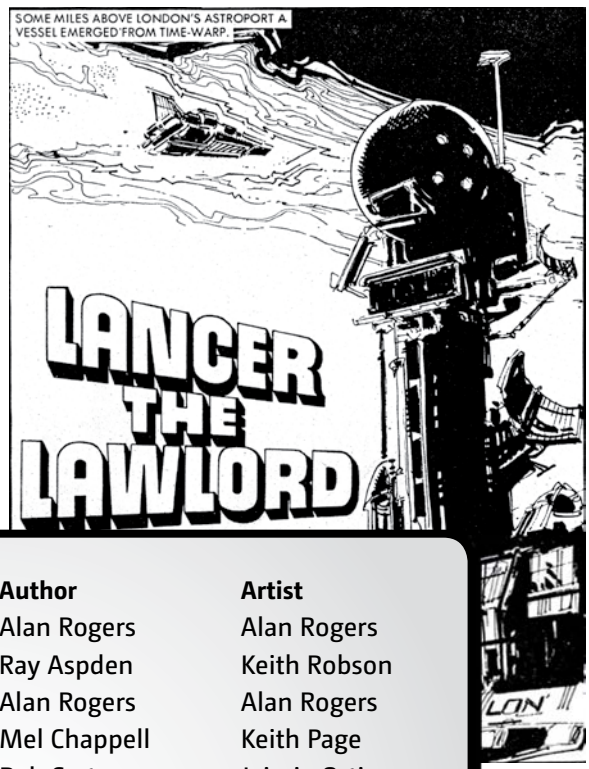
Starblazer Issues

Here's a brief history and listing of the Starblazer comics, players and story tellers could choose names of character's Starblazer Legends from this list or use it for inspiration for Aspects and adventures. It's also a dedication to the fantastic authors and artists who helped create the amazing Starblazer adventures which continue to inspire our imagination.

Issues 1-15

If you were around in 1979, the Village People we're starting a craze that would lead to people spelling out the disco hit 'YMCA' with their body parts, John Travolta was 'Greased Lightning', the world was still in the grip of Space Invaders after it's release the previous year, Squeeze released the classic 'Up the Junction' and Rainbow rocked out with 'Since You've Been Gone'. In the movies Bond got it on sci-fi style with Moonraker and the first screams in space went unheard with Alien. In the UK Liverpool were blasting their way to another League title, and the pound in the pocket was worth fifteen cents over two dollars. It was April 24th of that year that the first issue of Starblazer hit the streets. Drawn and scripted by Alan Rogers, it heralded the start of a series of outstanding stories by outstanding authors and artists. Among the fifteen issues of that year, note the debut of Alcatena, an Argentinean genius, whose imaginative work is legendary, and the scripter/artist of number 15...yes the very same Grant Morrison who went on to produce numerous comic hits including the much acclaimed Arkham Asylum.

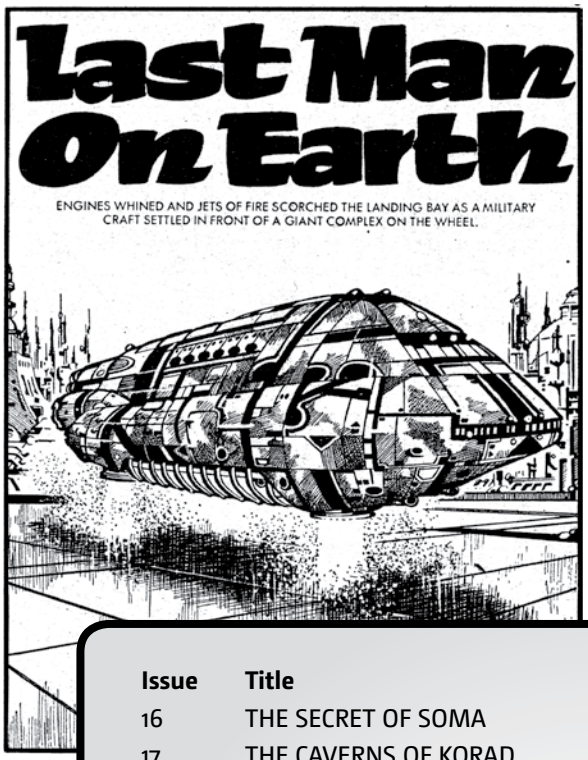


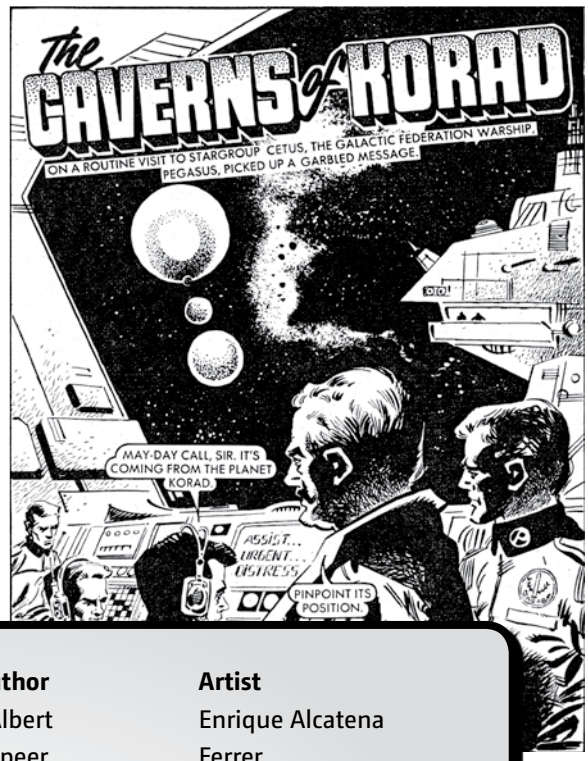


Issue	Title	Author	Artist
1	THE OMEGA EXPERIMENT	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
2	THE DOMES OF DEATH	Ray Aspden	Keith Robson
3	ALIEN ATTACK	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
4	THE EDGE OF INFINITY	Mel Chappell	Keith Page
5	THE SHIPEATER	Rob Carter	Jaimie Ortiz
6	KILLER ROBOT	John Speer	Carrasco
7	HOLOCAUST HOGAN	Mike Knowles	Enrique Alcatena
8	PLANET OF FEAR	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
9	LANCER THE LAWLORD	Tony Eccles	Norman Lee
10	TERROR SATELLITE	David R Motton	Jaimie Ortiz
11	PURPLE PLANET	J Radford	Juan Sarompas
12	THE WEB OF ARCON	Mike Knowles	Carlos Pino
13	HELL SHIP	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
14	BATTLECRUISER REVENGE	R Tufnell	Carrasco
15	ALGOL THE TERRIBLE	Grant Morrison	Grant Morrison

Issues 16-39

The first full year of Starblazer saw increasing interest from both reader and writer. No fewer than seventeen authors contributed to 1980's quota of stories. It's amazing they could find time from playing Pac-Man which was the hit arcade game that year.


Last Man On Earth
ENGINES WHINED AND JETS OF FIRE SCORCHED THE LANDING BAY AS A MILITARY CRAFT SETTLED IN FRONT OF A GIANT COMPLEX ON THE WHEEL.


The CAVERNS of KORAD
ON A ROUTINE VISIT TO STARGROUP CETUS, THE GALACTIC FEDERATION WARSHIP PEGASUS, PICKED UP A GARBLED MESSAGE.
MAY-DAY CALL, SIR. IT'S COMING FROM THE PLANET KORAD.
ASSIST... URGENT... DISTRESS
PINPOINT ITS POSITION.

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
16	THE SECRET OF SOMA	J Albert	Enrique Alcatena
17	THE CAVERNS OF KORAD	J Speer	Ferrer
18	ABANDON EARTH	D Broadbent	Montero
19	SINISTER CIY	Ray Aspden	Olivera
20	THE DOOMSDAY MACHINES	D Dixon	Jaimie Ortiz
21	ROBOT REBELLION	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
22	THE PIRATE OF VEGA III	G P Rice	Juan Juan Sarompas
23	SLAVESHIP OF SIMALA	D Broadbent	Navarro
24	AVENGING ANGEL	J Albert	Enrique Alcatena
25	GALACTIC SHOOOUT	R Carter	Jaimie Ortiz
26	ALIEN CONTACT	R Carter	Jaimie Ortiz
27	THE DRIFTERS OF DARGA	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
28	LAST MAN ON EARTH	Grant Morrison	Keith Robson
29	THE MOONSTEALERS	W Webb	Enrique Alcatena
30	THE POSITRONIS CANNON	C Shelborne	Ferrer
31	STARSTRIKE	Ray Aspden	Enrique Alcatena
32	THE MACHINE MASTER	M Chamberlain	Enrique Alcatena
33	THE LOST PLANET	R Tufnell	Carrasco
34	THE SEAS OF SAMOR	J Radford	Jaimie Ortiz
35	LORD OF JARKNESS	R Tuffnell	Carlos Pino
36	DEATHSHIP	S Neeld	Enrique Alcatena
37	THE PLANET CRACKER	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
38	THE SEEDS OF DOOM	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
39	THE OVERLORDS OF OLTAIR	W Corderoy	Jaimie Ortiz

Issues 40-63

By 1981, Starblazer, now firmly established, attracted still more young writers, Mike Knowles and Dave Taylor to name but two. The ever-inventive Alcatena remained the mainstay on the art side, ably backed up by Ortiz. The covers were fairly evenly divided between agency transparencies and commissioned work.

THE CRIPPLED SHUTTLE SWEPT LOW OVER A DERELICT CITY.
GET YOUR NOSE UP, BABY. GET IT UP!
LOOK TOR. A CITY! BUT IT'S COMPLETELY DERELICT.

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
40	THE PLANET TAMER	G P Rice	Jaimie Ortiz
41	ASSAULT ON PLANET DESTRA	Ray Aspden	Ferrer
42	THE IMMORTALS	M Stall	Alberto Saichann
43	NOWHERE WORLD	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
44	THE CAVERNS OF OBLIVION	Ray Aspden	Montero
45	OPEATION OVERKILL	Grant Morrison	Enrique Alcatena
46	BLINDWORLD	J Radford	Jaimie Ortiz
47	ANDROMEDA INCIENT	C Shelborne	Enrique Alcatena
48	KING ROBOT	M Gorton	Ferrer
49	RIGEL EXPRESS	W Reed	Enrique Alcatena
50	MOONSPLITTER	Ray Aspden	Saichann
51	THE PRISONERS OF ZORR	P Dunn	Juan Sarompas
52	THE MASK OF FEAR	M Stall	Montero
53	SAMURAI WARRIOR	Mike Knowles	Alberto Saichann
54	THE TORTURER OF TRITON II	Ray Aspden	Enrique Alcatena
55	TARGET EARTH	T Stent	Carlos Pino
56	SLEEPING LEGION	S Neeld	Enrique Alcatena
57	GALACTIC LAWMAN	G P Rice	Jaimie Ortiz
58	PYRAMID POWER!	M Chappell	Urbez
59	STARSEEKER SQUAD	W Reed	Enrique Alcatena
60	THE MEGAKILLERS	Alan Rogers	Carlos Pino
61	ESCAPE FROM DEVIL'S MOON	Dave H Taylor	Jaimie Ortiz
62	TERROR TOMB	Ray Aspden	Enrique Alcatena
63	LORDS OF THE WIDERNESS	C Shelbourn	Martinez

[*Appendix 1: Starblazer Issues*]▷

Issues 64-87

1982 started with a tale from yet another young writer, Mike Chinn who kept up a remarkably high standard over the years. Issue number 71, Jaws of Death, was drawn by a stalwart of the British comic scene, Mike McMahon, his only contribution to Starblazer, but an impressive one.

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
64	THE EXTERMINATOR	Mike Chinn	Enrique Alcatena
65	NEVERWORLD	G P Rice	Jaimie Ortiz
66	THE PIRATES OF KA-LOR	J Speer	Enrique Alcatena
67	TIME TUNNEL	D Broadbent	Saichann
68	COSMIC KILLER	M Gorton	Juan Sarompas
69	NIGHTMARE PLANET	Alan Rogers	Jaimie Ortiz
70	SPACETROOPER ATTACK	Alan Rogers	Keith Robson
71	JAWS OF DEATH	D Broadbent	Mick McMahon
72	MASSACRE ON THULE	W Reed	Benet
73	FEAR ON THE SPACEWAYS	G P Rice	Jaimie Ortiz
74	KILLER CLONES	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
75	DOOMROCK	W Reed	Enrique Alcatena
76	THE MIND OF MERIDITH MORGAN	G P Rice	Carlos Pino
77	FORTRESS OF FEAR	Ray Aspden	Enrique Alcatena
78	DOORWAY TO DOOM	M Furnass	N Lee
79	THE RING OF TERROR	Alan Rogers	Amador
80	THE MAN WHO COULD WALK THROUGH WALLS	Alan Rogers	Saichann
81	THE SERPENTS OF SIRIUS	Ray Aspden	Enrique Alcatena
82	SPACE SHOOT-OUT	T Stent	Boluda
83	WEAPONWORLD	T Stent	Saichann
84	THE LOST DESTROYER	R Carter	Montero
85	BEYOND THE BLACK HOLE	C Shelbourn	Benet
86	THE COSMIC OUTLAW	Grant Morrison	Jaimie Ortiz
87	INVADERS FROM THE BLACK STAR	Ray Aspden	Alan Rogers

Issues 88-111

The fifth year of Starblazer produced two dozen varied stories, still set firmly in the depths of space. 1983 was a vintage year for artists...Redondo, Geoff Senior, Cam Kennedy and Tony O'Donnell being the best known

BUT A COMPUTER CHECK REVEALED THAT THE IMPOSSIBLE HAD OCCURRED —
PROBLEM WITH THE REACTOR. LOSING POWER — HAVE TO CHECK THIS OUT . . . LOCATION OF NEAREST ANGEL STATION PLEASE, COMPUTER . . .
ANGEL STATIONS WERE AUTOMATED SPACE STATIONS SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY AND DESIGNED TO AID TRAVELLERS IN DISTRESS.
ON THE ANGEL STATION —
STATION BETA, SIX-BEARING ZERO ZERO TWO, POINT FIVE SPACIALS DISTANT. REACTOR HOLDS ENOUGH POWER TO ENSURE SAFE ARRIVAL.
BETA SIX

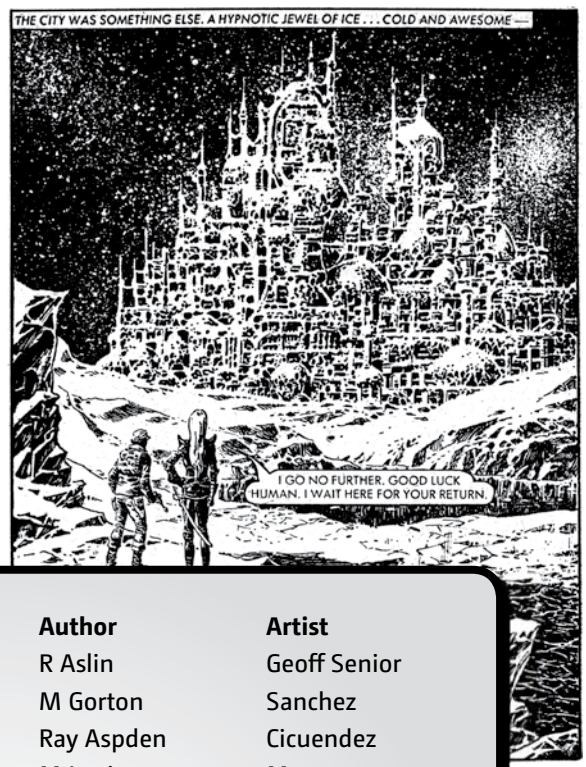
YOU . . . YOU'RE CRAZY!
NO, DOCTOR. IF I WERE, COULD I HAVE BUILT UP SUCH A POWERFUL CRIMINAL EMPIRE, OPERATING ONLY THROUGH MY COMPUTERS?
I ASSURE YOU I AM QUITE SANE—AND MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU MIGHT REALISE. POWERFUL ENOUGH TO LEARN ONE OF THE UNITED PLANETS ORGANISATION'S BEST-KEPT SECRETS . . . THAT IT WAS YOU WHO BUILT THE PLANET TAMER!

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
88	TERROR PLANET	M Stall	Enrique Alcatena
89	THE TOWERING TURBULANCE	Ray Aspden	Masip
90	RETURN OF THE PLANET TAMER	G P Rice	Jaimie Ortiz
91	THE ACID SEAS OF KOGA	S Neeld	Boluda
92	SPACE ASSAULT SQUAD	W Reed	Boluda
93	THE MIDAS MACHINE	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
94	THE MEGALOI MENACE	M Stall	Saichann
95	THE GATE TO YESTERDAY	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
96	THE PROMISED PLANET	G Parker	Redondo
97	THE TRIANGLE OF TERROR	M Chappell	Jaimie Ortiz
98	THE LAST PLANET	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
99	THE FLOATING CITIES OF NEXIOS	C Harris	Benet
100	PIRATES OF THE ETHER SEA	Ray Aspden	Jesus Redondo
101	THE FORGOTTEN WORLD	R H Bonsall	Jaimie Ortiz
102	THE SIEGE OF THE SEABED CITY	M Furnass	Geoff Senior
103	ROBOTS OF DEATH	T Stent	Carlos Pino
104	THE BATTLE FOR BEACON BRAVO	Alan Rogers	Cicuendez
105	THE CONQUERORS OF EARTH	E G Cowan	Cam Kennedy
106	SPACE WARRIOR	J Speer	Sanchez
107	THE MAGNON MARAUDERS	M Chappell	Casanovas
108	STAR FORT ALPHA	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
109	THE SWORD OF SOLEK	Ray Aspden	Jaimie Ortiz
110	THE TOMB OF TARA	K Gentry	Boluda
111	SPACE GHOST!	E G Cowan	Tony O'Donnell

[Appendix 1: Starblazer Issues]

Issues 112-135

In 1984, The Death Reaper (number 172) became the first story in a series which was still going six years later. Yes Mikal R.Kayn, private eye, became a regular feature. Written by Grant Morrison and drawn by Alcatena, this story was instrumental in changing the face of Starblazer. Death Reaper was also notable for the introduction of a female lead, Cinnibar

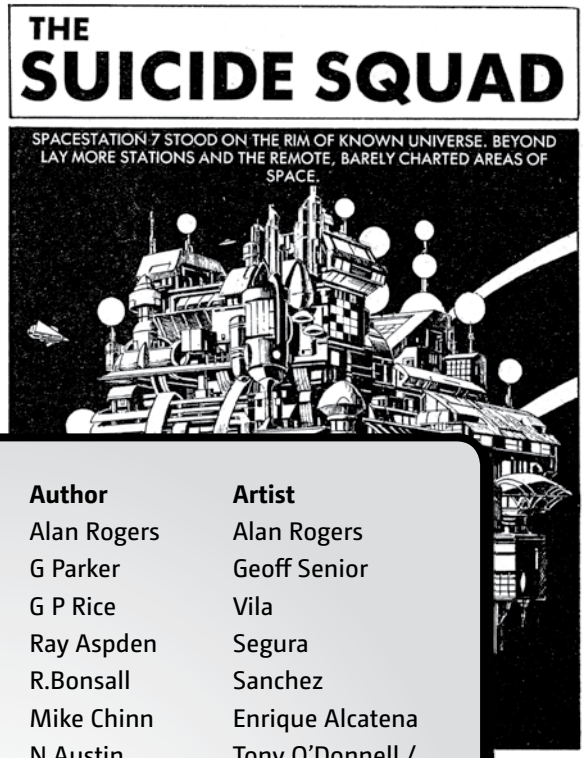

THE CITY WAS SOMETHING ELSE. A HYPNOTIC JEWEL OF ICE . . . COLD AND AWESOME —
I GO NO FURTHER. GOOD LUCK HUMAN. I WAIT HERE FOR YOUR RETURN.

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
112	SUNSTEALERS	R Aslin	Geoff Senior
113	THE STONEMEN	M Gorton	Sanchez
114	THE LAST BATTLEGROUND	Ray Aspden	Cicuendez
115	LIBERTY GODDESS	M Lepine	Montero
116	THE STARSTONE	M Furnass	Geoff Senior
117	THE TERROR TOWERS OF TYR	T Stent	Sanchez
118	THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS	Ray Aspden	Casanovas
119	COSMIC COMMANDOS	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
120	KILLER COMET	R Aslin	Geoff Senior
121	NIGHTMARE SHIP!	Ray Aspden	Jaimie Ortiz
122	ALIEN INVASION	W Reed	Enrique Alcatena
123	THE PLANET EATER	Ray Aspden	Sanchez
124	THE CRYSTAL KILLERS	K Gentry	Saichann
125	SABER THE SLAYER	J Albert	Enrique Alcatena
126	ALIEN BATTLESHIP	T Stent	Jaimie Ortiz
127	THE DEATH REAPER	Grant Morrison	Enrique Alcatena
128	THE GRAVE OF MANKIND	K Gentry	Sanchez
129	CHARIOTS OF FEAR	C Alan	N Lee
130	VASSALÕS REVENGE	Ray Aspden	Saichann
131	THE KILLING GROUND	R H Bonsall	Jaimie Ortiz
132	THE UNDEAD	C Harris	Casanovas
133	DEATH CAME SILENTLY!	K Gentry	Sauri
134	AMBUSH ON ANGON-EL	P Dunn	Jaimie Ortiz
135	THE LOST PATROL	J Sutter	Saichann

Issues 136-159

1984 closed with Band Aid at number one and 1985 opened with Band Aid still at number one. Starblazer continued with its diet of space adventure interrupted only by a pair of role-playing stories – 150, Captains Choice and 158, Axel the Avenger. These tales, although not without merit, weren't a resounding success and were discontinued. Highlights were from the typewriters of Ray Aspden, Mike Chinn and Mike Knowles and the pens of Alcatena, O'Donnell and Saichan.

FAR OUT IN THE GALACTIC OCEAN, ON THE EX-TERRAN COLONY OF ARENAL, THE RUTHLESS BARON TARB SURVEYED HIS BRUTAL CONQUEST. BY HIS SIDE STOOD LEONOTUS, A SON OF THE ORDER OF ALCHEMY — THE PRIESTS OF SCIENCE. HE WAS THE . . .
KNIGHT of DARKNESS
ORGANISED RESISTANCE IS AT AN END, LEONOTUS! THE PALACE IS OURS.

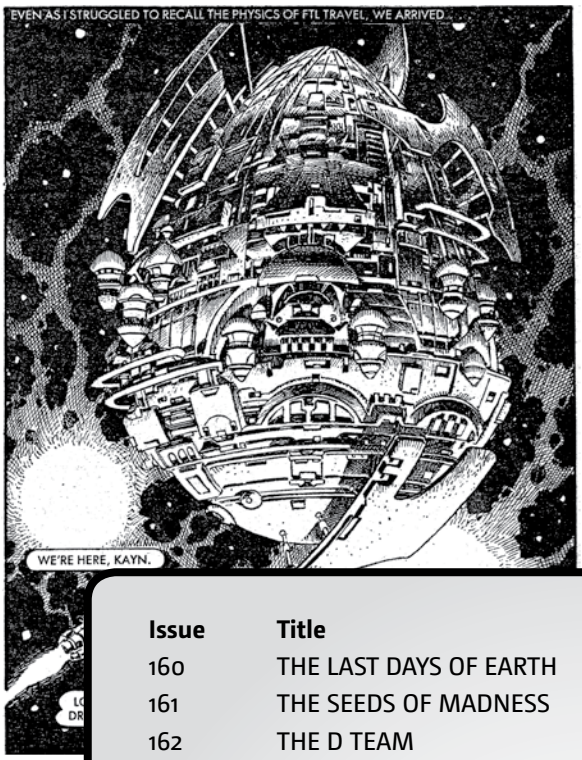

THE
SUICIDE SQUAD
SPACESTATION 7 STOOD ON THE RIM OF KNOWN UNIVERSE. BEYOND LAY MORE STATIONS AND THE REMOTE, BARELY CHARTED AREAS OF SPACE.

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
136	TROUBLESHOOTER	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
137	GUARDIAN OF THE VORTEX	G Parker	Geoff Senior
138	THE RAID ON ROUKE'S STAR	G P Rice	Vila
139	ASTRAL ARMADA	Ray Aspden	Segura
140	DEATHWHEEL	R.Bonsall	Sanchez
141	SPACEROAMER	Mike Chinn	Enrique Alcatena
142	GATEWAY TO TERROR	N Austin	Tony O'Donnell / Grant Morrison
143	NIGHTMARE FROM NAZZOS	Alan Rogers	Jaimie Ortiz
144	THE SAILFIGHTERS OF SOIL 7	RH Bonsall	Enrique Alcatena
145	THE CAVES OF CRYSTAL CARBON	Ray Aspden	Saichann
146	KNIGHT OF DARKNESS	Ray Aspden	Jaimie Ortiz
147	ATTACK FORCE X	Alan Rogers	Segura
148	THE KILLING GAME	R H Bonsall	Vila
149	DEADLY PILGRIMAGE	M Furnass	Enrique Alcatena
150	CAPTAIN'S CHOICE	Staff	Keith Robson
151	EXTINCTION EARTH!	Alan Rogers	Alan Rogers
152	DOOM WORLD!	Ray Aspden	Tony O'Donnell / Inks by Grant Morrison
153	THE STAR DESTROYERS	M Stall	Cicuendez
154	THE SUICIDE SQUAD	W Reed	Enrique Alcatena
155	RETURN TO DARKLAND	R H Bonsall	Casanovas Snr
156	THE SYGMA WARRIOR	Mike Knowles	Albrto Saichann
157	WARWORLD	Alan Rogers	Segura
158	AXEL THE AVENGER	Staff	Keith Robson
159	BATTLEWORLD	Ray Aspden	Jaimie Ortiz

[*Appendix 1: Starblazer Issues*]▷

Issues 160-183

1986 was a watershed with the old style cover finally giving way to a wrap-around in issue 168. Timeslay was written by John Smith and is an outstanding take brilliantly drawn by Alcatena. Another fine artist, Garijo, made his Starblazer debut with Grok and Zero in number 176. A definite change in direction was noticeable, with stories tending towards sword and sorcery and the content perhaps more adult.



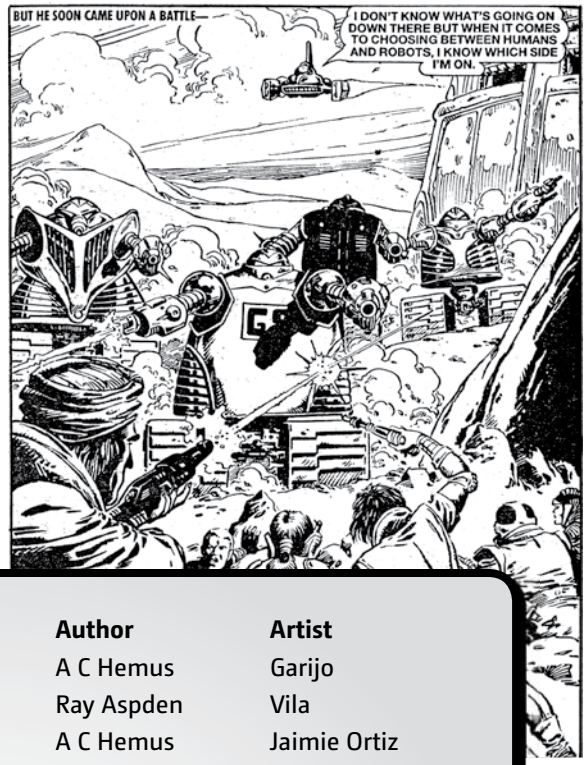
STAR KNIGHT
THE SKELETON OF A LONG DEAD SPACE DINOSAUR WAS HOME TO A DYING RACE, THE SYRANS. THE TIME WAS-THAT WHEN EARTH WAS BORN.

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
160	THE LAST DAYS OF EARTH	David Motton	Jaimie Ortiz
161	THE SEEDS OF MADNESS	N Jordan	Enrique Alcatena
162	THE D TEAM	W Reed	Enrique Alcatena
163	HEAD HUNTER	John Smith	Segura
164	THE FIGHTING STARDOME	W Reed	Jaimie Ortiz
165	THE EXECUTIONER	Staff	Jesus Redondo
166	THE CLONE RANGER	Ray Aspden	Enrique Alcatena
167	MIND BENDER	Grant Morrison	Enrique Alcatena
168	TIMESLAY	John Smith	Enrique Alcatena
169	THE FINAL SANCTION	Mike Knowles	Jaimie Ortiz
170	THE LASER SWORD	Ray Aspden	Enrique Alcatena
171	STAR KNIGHT	D Smith	Jaimie Ortiz
172	NIGHTRAIDER	Mike Chinn	Jaimie Ortiz
173	THE VEGAS MURDERS	S Bounds	Jaimie Ortiz
174	THE TERRMINATOR	Alan Rogers	Jaimie Ortiz
175	THE BLACK LORD	Mike Knowles	Enrique Alcatena
176	GROK AND ZERO	A C Hemus	Garijo
177	THE MIDAS MYSTERY	Grant Morrison	Enrique Alcatena
178	THE SECRET WAR	Ray Aspden	Segura
179	MANDROID	Mike Knowles	Enrique Alcatena
180	EDEN THE HUNTER	A Whiteley	Segura
181	DEATH TREK	David Motton	Jaimie Ortiz
182	BRON THE AVENGER	W Corderoy	Segura
183	THE CYBORG CHASER	W Reed	Segura

Issues 184-207

Demonsword, the first chronicle in a five part series saw the light of day in September, 1987. This tale relates the saga of the ruling family of Anglerre and was to continue in to 1990. From the pen of Mike Chinn and illustrated by the surreal Alcatena, this represents the story and illustration of the highest order. Just to show his versatility, Mike Chin also wrote The Robot Kid, the first in a series of film spoofs. Drawn by Garijo, whose eye for the ridiculous added a wonderful touch of adult humour to an already funny story.

COLONIA'S MINISTERS CONVENED AN EMERGENCY MEETING
AS YOU WILL RECALL, CELEBRATIONS IN 1304 AND 1306 WERE MARRED BY EXPLOSIONS. WE KNOW THEY WERE THE WORK OF TERRORISTS FROM THE PLANETS HOLCI AND MONTA. WE MUST ACT AGAINST THEM.
1304
1306
SANCTIONS?


BUT HE SOON CAME UPON A BATTLE
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON DOWN THERE BUT WHEN IT COMES TO CHOOSING BETWEEN HUMANS AND ROBOTS, I KNOW WHICH SIDE I'M ON.

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
184	THE RETURN OF GROK AND ZERO	A C Hemus	Garijo
185	THE WARLORD OF LAAMA	Ray Aspden	Vila
186	STARHAWK	A C Hemus	Jaimie Ortiz
187	MIND WARRIOR	Alan Rogers	Vila
188	THE INFERNAL TRIANGLE	Casanovas Jnr	Casanovas Jnr
189	THE KILLING ZONE	R H Bonsall	Segura
190	THE POWER OF THE WARLOCKS	A C Hemus	Enrique Alcatena
191	CARTERÕS LAW	Mike Knowles	Casanovas Jnr
192	THE FACE OF EVIL	Dave H Taylor	Tony O'Donnell
193	THE LEGEND OF THE GOLDEN AXE	W Corderoy	Jaimie Ortiz
194	CABEL AND THE SHE WARRIOR	R Alexander	Garijo
195	COMPUTER COMMANDOS	B Georgiou	Vila
196	SKARR WARRIOR OF THE NORLANDS	W Corderoy	Enrique Alcatena
197	THE LAW LORD	A C Hemus	Segura
198	TIME WARRIORS	W Corderoy	Casanovas Jnr
199	NETHER WORLD	A C Hemus	Enrique Alcatena
200	DEMON SWORD	Mike Chinn	Enrique Alcatena
201	RETURN OF STARHAWK	Dave H Taylor	Jaimie Ortiz
202	LORD OF THE FAR PLANET	A C Hemus	Garijo
203	WIPE OUT	A C Hemus	Jaimie Ortiz
204	THE ROBOT KID	Mike Chinn	Garijo
205	THE HEXALYN LOCATION	P Alexander	Segura
206	BATTLEWAGON	A C Hemus	Vila
207	CITIZEN KAYN	W Corderoy	Enrique Alcatena

Issues 208-231

"Video games don't affect kids, I mean if Pac-Man affected us as kids, we'd all be running around darkened rooms, munching pills and listening to repetitive music"

Allegedly this famous quote is by Kristian Wilson, Nintendo VP, 1989 but actually has been part of comedian Marcus Brigstocke's comedy set for 6 years.

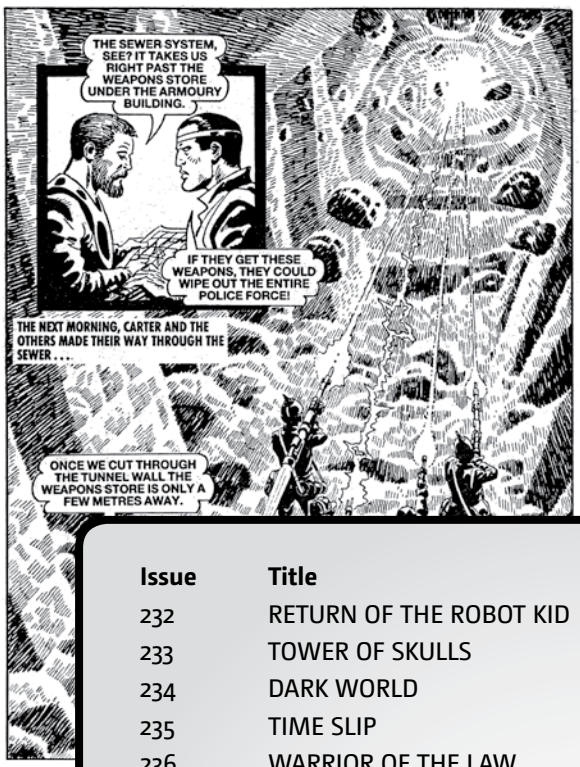
In 1988, whilst people in the UK were waving glow sticks around at all night raves and dancing to those repetitive beats, a young Spaniard, Casanovas drew a tale called The Ardarian Knight. Although he had drawn three the previous year, this story marked the start of an amazing series of styles. A dark, mournful take of war and sorcery, this young man revealed a talent for conveying atmosphere and emotion achieved by nobody else at the time with the exception of Alcatena. Note also that number 225 was drawn by his father, a stalwart of British comics for many years.

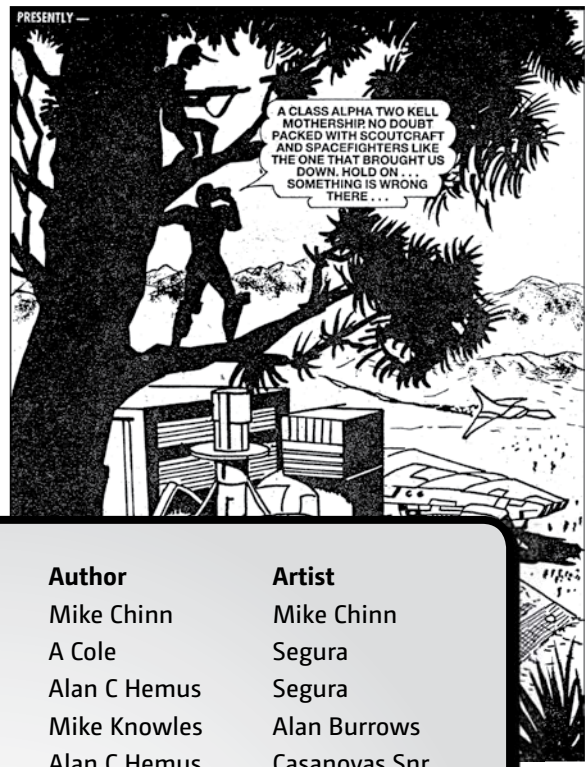
ARE YOU NOT ANGRY WITH KAYNE?
SUCH EMOTIONS ARE UNKNOWN TO ME. I AM PROGRAMMED PURELY FOR OBEDIENCE.
THE PLACE WAS OLD ENOUGH TO BE A MUSEUM — WORKSHOPS WITH LITTLE USED MACHINERY AND RUSTING ROBOMECHS . . . EVEN THAT ANCIENT KIND OF ILLUMINATION MADE BY ELECTRICITY PASSING THROUGH FILAMENTS IN VACUUM TUBES . .
POP PERZ WAS A GENIUS, AND AN OLD FRIEND. HE MADE TOYS, AND . . . THINGS.
POP, WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MANLIKE CREATURES FASHIONED FROM SYNTHETIC MATERIAL?

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
208	PLANET OF THE DEAD	Dave H Taylor	Segura
209	THE RING OF GOFANNON	Grant Morrison	Garijo
210	DRAGON SLAYER	M Wild	Jaimie Ortiz
211	THE DREAM MACHINE	A C Hemus	Segura
212	ROGUE COP	Dave H Taylor	Segura
213	SKARR THE SOLDIER	W Corderoy	Enrique Alcatena
214	BLIND RAGE	W Corderoy	Segura
215	CARTER AND THE KILLER	Mike Knowles	Vila
216	TROUBLE IN BABALON	A C Hemus	Jaimie Ortiz
217	THE PIRATES OF PENZ-ANZ	A C Hemus	Garijo
218	THE ARDARIAN KNIGHT	M Reilly	Casanovas Jnr
219	TILL DEATH DO US PART	A C Hemus	Enrique Alcatena
220	TIMEWARP	Mike Knowles	Vila
221	BEASTWORLD	A C Hemus	Enrique Alcatena
222	TARGET STARHAWK	M Wild	Jaimie Ortiz
223	THE KYLUM LOCATION	P Alexander	Segura
224	RUNE WAR	Mike Chinn	Enrique Alcatena
225	SUPERCOP	A C Hemus	Garijo
226	PRINCE OF FEAR	Dave H Taylor	Tony O'Donnell / Rob Moran
227	ROGUE COP'S RETURN	M Bilsborough	Segura
228	THE SECRET OF ICE MOUNTAIN	W Corderoy	Vila
229	SOLO'S QUEST	A C Hemus	Garijo
230	A PLAGUE OF HORSEMEN	Mike Chinn	Tony O'Donnell / Vincent Danks
231	GODSTONE	Mike Chinn	Enrique Alcatena

Issues 232-255

1989 kicked off with a brace of stories from the pens of two figures well-known in the SF world. Mike Chinn contributed another tale of chaos, courtesy of the Robot Kid, while Adrian Cole's story, Tower of Skulls, took us through the darkness of a fantasy world and into the bright light of hope. There wasn't a bad tale in '89, but perhaps the highlight was the dark and sombre saga from the pen of Casanovas junior, Song of the Sword. Yes, the talented young Spaniard wrote and illustrated this fine story. If you haven't read it, you don't know what you've missed!

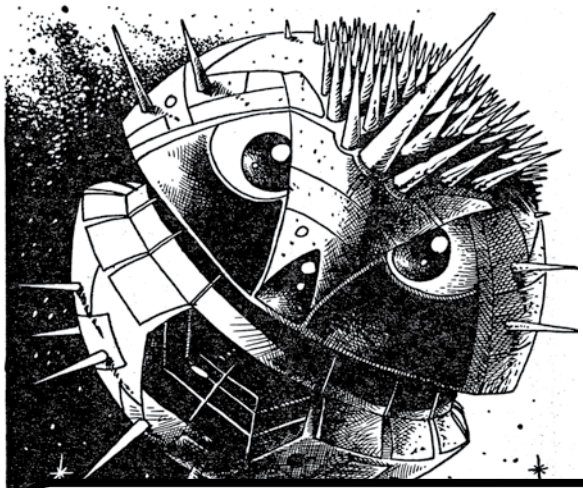

THE SEWER SYSTEM, SEE? IT TAKES US RIGHT PAST THE WEAPONS STORE UNDER THE ARMOURY BUILDING.
IF THEY GET THESE WEAPONS, THEY COULD WIPE OUT THE ENTIRE POLICE FORCE!
THE NEXT MORNING, CARTER AND THE OTHERS MADE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE SEWER . . .
ONCE WE CUT THROUGH THE TUNNEL WALL THE WEAPONS STORE IS ONLY A FEW METRES AWAY.


PRESENTLY —
A CLASS ALPHA TWO KELL MOTHERSHIP. NO DOUBT PACKED WITH SCOUTCRAFT AND SPACEFIGHTERS LIKE THE ONE THAT BROUGHT US DOWN. HOLD ON . . . SOMETHING IS WRONG THERE . . .

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
232	RETURN OF THE ROBOT KID	Mike Chinn	Mike Chinn
233	TOWER OF SKULLS	A Cole	Segura
234	DARK WORLD	Alan C Hemus	Segura
235	TIME SLIP	Mike Knowles	Alan Burrows
236	WARRIOR OF THE LAW	Alan C Hemus	Casanovas Snr
237	ROUGH JUSTICE	P Alexander	Casanovas Jnr
238	THE PRINCE AND THE PEASANT	Alan C Hemus	Vila
239	DESOLATION CITY	Mike Knowles	Segura
240	SLAYER IN THE MIST	M Gateley	Enrique Alcatena
241	REVENGE OF THE WARLOCKS	Alan C Hemus	Garijo
242	THE PYSCHO SQUAD	Dave H Taylor	Alan Burrows
243	DEATH RUN	Dave H Taylor	Andrew Currie
244	DOUBLE TROUBLE	Alan C Hemus	Garijo
245	ROGUE MANDROID	Alan C Hemus	Vila
246	THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS	S Pratt	Garijo
247	KATN'S QUEST	Mike Chinn	Segura
248	TALES OF THE OTHERWORLD	Mike Chinn	Garijo
249	LIONHEART	Alan Cowsill	Alan Burrows
250	SUN PRINCE	Mike Chinn	Enrique Alcatena
251	SONG OF THE SWORD	Casanovas Jnr	Casanovas Jnr
252	HEAD CASE	Alan C Hemus	Segura
253	REVOLT IN BABALON	Alan C Hemus	D Willets
254	THE CURSED LAND	Steve Holland	Sauri
255	THE S.A.D. MAN	Alan C Hemus	P Rowlands

Issues 256-281

Having safely negotiated its tenth birthday in 1989, Starblazer entered the 90's a more adult publication. The standard of story remained the highest quality, but the method of telling it became harder, and on occasion humorous. Cobra, number 262, is an excellent scripted story, brilliantly drawn – and is perhaps the best of all Starblazer stories. As an contrast to this tale of corporate and governmental lunacy, number 272 provided the light relief with The Robot Kid Strikes Back.



AN ELEVATOR, CARTER — NOT ANTI-GRAV, BUT THE SIMPLE OLD-FASHIONED HYDRAULIC KIND. COME! TAKE A RIDE.
THE ELEVATOR MOVED — DOWNWARD.
A DROP OF TEN LEVELS INTO A DEFENSIVE SHIELD DESIGNED AGAINST ANY FORM OF ELECTRONIC OR BIOLOGICAL PENETRATION — A SECRET EXTRA, CARTER, ADDED BY THE CORPORATION THAT INSTALLED THE COMPUTER AND WHICH WAS RUN BY MYSELF IN THE YEARS BEFORE MY ELECTION.

Issue	Title	Author	Artist
256	CONVICT KAYN	Alan C Hemus	Andrew Currie
257	RAVENMASTER	M Gately	Jesus Redondo
258	COMPUTER KILLER	Steve Holland	Vila
259	DARK DYNASTY	Alan C Hemus	Garijo
260	CARTER BREAKS LOOSE	Alan C Hemus	Enrique Alcatena
261	SON OF THE SWORD	Alan C Hemus	Alan Burrows
262	COBRA	Dave H Taylor	Enrique Alcatena
263	THE KILLING TRADE	S Pratt	Richard Johnson
264	BANISHED FROM BABALON	Alan C Hemus	Vila
265	THE TERMINATION	Mike Knowles	Segura
266	BADLANDS	Alan C Hemus	Segura
267	SKALD	Alan C Hemus	Garijo
268	OUTWORLD WAR	Alan C Hemus	Salinas
269	HERO – THE ULTIMATE GAMESHOW	Dave H Taylor	Richard Johnson
270	THE WARRIOR QUEST	T J Spencer	Sauri
271	THE TRIUNE WARRIOR	Mike Chinn	Enrique Alcatena
272	CARTER'S FURY	Mike Knowles	Casanovas Jnr
273	THE ROBOT KID STRIKES AGAIN	Mike Chinn	Garijo
274	SKALD – THE ULTIMATE CONFLICT	Alan C Hemus	Enrique Alcatena
275	SUPER WIMP	Alan C Hemus	Casanovas Jnr
276	OUTGUARD	Alan C Hemus	Alan Burrows
277	ALPHA	Mike Knowles	Enrique Alcatena
278	ZERO'S HOUR	Alan C Hemus	Garijo
279	THE NO NAME MAN	S Pratt	Alan Burrows
280	CARTER AND THE CRAZIES	Unknown	Unknown
281	THE ENCHANTED HELMET	Alan C Hemus	Casanovas Jnr

THE RESULT WAS CONFUSION.
WHAT'S GOING ON, SIR? . . . THE CITY'S IN AN UPROAR!
I DON'T KNOW! DON'T JUST STAND THERE TALKING—GET OUT AND FIGHT!

APPENDIX TWO

Rules Summary

The Ladder

+8:	Legendary
+7:	Epic
+6:	Fantastic
+5:	Superb
+4:	Great
+3:	Good
+2:	Fair
+1:	Average
0:	Mediocre
-1:	Poor
-2:	Terrible
-3:	Abysmal

Dice: Roll two 6 sided dice. Subtract one dice from the other to get a result from -5 through 0 to +5.

Skills are rated as shown on **the ladder**.

Margin of Success and Failure: Skill plus dice total is called the **Effort**. Effort is then compared against difficulty or the total rolled by opponent. If the Effort is greater, the difference is called **Shifts**, which can be used to inflict **Stress** (see below) or improve the result.

Spin results when you get 3 Shifts or more and lets you modify the very next dice roll by 1.

FATE points can be spent to:

- Gain +1 on any dice roll
- Invoke an Aspect
- Take a little control over the story: find an appropriate item, knowing someone in a particular location, arriving at a scene at the right time

Aspects: If an Aspect is relevant to a situation it can be **Invoked** or **Compelled** after the dice roll to improve or worsen the result. This costs a **FATE Point**. Scene Aspects can be tagged by the characters for bonuses.

- *Invocation:* +2 to a result or re-roll the result
- *Compelled:* Gain a FATE point (may resist Compel but must pay the total offered Fate points)

Effect of Shifts

0 Shifts – Minimal Success. Neither cool nor clever

1 Shift – Notable Success. Nothing inspired but it's a good job

3 Shifts – Significant Success. A fine quality job, more reliable than usual.

5 Shifts – Potent Success. Such an amazing effort that there could be a side benefit, such as doing it very fast, or gaining extra insight in to the problem.

Each Shift could reduce time required by 1 increment, improves job quality by 1 step, makes job harder to detect by 1 step.

Stunts let you do something special in a limited circumstance. Whenever your character is in that position or condition, they can utilize the bonus provided by the Stunt.

Stress can be absorbed by taking **Consequences**. Consequences can absorb different amounts of Stress: Minor (–2), Major (–4), Severe (–6), Extreme (–8). You can take a maximum of **three** different Consequences. If you run out of Stress your character is **Taken Out**.

Weapons, Armour, and Shields add or subtract from inflicted Stress once an attack hits.

Conflicts play like this:

- **Frame The Scene** – What Aspects and Zones are present? Only happens once.
- Each turn:
  - » **Initiative** – Who goes in what order around the table, including foes
  - » **Take Action** – When it's your turn take an action as described below

Actions include the following options.

Attack – Roll attack Skill vs. defence Skill to inflict Stress. See chart below for more.

Manoevre – Roll Skill vs. defence Skill to place temporary aspect or do some other trick.

Full Defence – +2 to your defensive Skill rolls until next exchange.

Block – Person you are helping uses the better of their defence total or yours

Hold Action – Wait for someone else to move before deciding what to do

Supplemental Action – Take –1 to your Skill action to perform a minor additional action.

Combining Skills – Roll primary Skill and +1 for secondary Skill (or restrict by -1)

Movement – move 1 zone as supplemental action or **Sprint** by rolling Athletics vs. Mediocre. Shifts equal zones you can move. Border values add to difficulty.

Action's Goal	Action's Skill	Defence's Skill
To physically harm	Fists, Guns, Weapons	Fists, Weapons, Athletics
To deceive	Deceit	Resolve, Empathy
To scare	Intimidation	Resolve
To charm	Rapport	Resolve, Deceit
To force movement	Might	Might

Time Increments

Instant
A few moments
Half a minute
A minute
A few minutes
15 minutes
Half an hour
An hour
A few hours
An afternoon
A day
A few days
A week
A few weeks
A month
A few months
A season
Half a year
A year
A few years
A decade
A lifetime
Generations
Centuries

Ship Conflict Quick Reference (Page 1)

Quick Ship Conflicts

- decide which ship based Skill to use for the conflict
- if desired, tag or invoke relevant Aspects
- roll using chosen Skill vs targets equivalent Skill
- winner assigns Stress to appropriate Stress track

Ship Crews

- Pilots of Medium(3) scale ships gain a free action
- For larger ships, a crew member is required for each action or a -1 penalty is incurred for each additional action
- Crew members with suitable Skill levels higher than the ships, may make Skill checks using their own Skills.
- Crew may use their own or the ships Fate points to invoke ship Aspects

Zones

- Space zones can have barrier values (see page 342)
- Zones also provide cover and obstruction
- Deduct barrier values from detection attempts & attack Skill checks against ships within a zone

Weapon Ranges

- Medium(3) scale ships: 1 zone
- Large(4) scale ships: 2 zones
- Huge(5) scale ships or larger: 4 zones

Conflict Sequence

1. Frame the Scene

- Describe the scene, zones, barrier values, special features using maps as desired

2. Detection

- Detection range is the relevant Skill level of the ship in Zones
- Include any modifiers as detailed on page 348
- Make Skill checks against targets in range
- Undetected ships may attack out of sequence

3. Establish Initiative

- Undetected & hidden ships auto-win initiative
- Initiative is determined by Skill level
- May use Ship Systems, Advanced Sensor Suite, EWS, Manoeuvre, Leadership or Arms for this

4. Begin Exchange

Phase A. Special Actions & Manoeuvres

- Any one of : Blocking action, Damage control, Detailed scan, EWS attack, Full defence, Grappling action, Hidden target detection, Hold your action, Launch Boarding Capsule, Launch mines, Repel boarders, Start boarding action

Phase B. Manoeuvring

- Roll Manoeuvre to ove the ship between zones
- Add ship's Manoeuvre Skill or pilots Starship Piloting Skill level to determine zone movement

Phase B. Ramming

- Ram attempts may be made vs targets in the same zone only
- Both ships make another Manoeuvre Skill check, if target roll is beaten ram succeeds
- Ram attacks may be augmented by the Grappling System Skill if used in Phase A.
- Structural Stress damage inflicted equals shifts generated plus it's scale level
- Other factors such as Reinforced Prow stunt and Hardened Structure Skill may affect this

Phase C. Ranged Attack

- All ships make a defensive manoeuvre roll using ships Manouevre or pilots Starship Piloting Skill
- Engaged ships make attack rolls in initiative order, usually, one attack per weapon type
- Use the highest Weapon Skill of the same type for an attack. Add Skill levels of additional weapons of the same type as bonus Stress if the target is hit.
- Add +3 to attack roll if target is unaware
- Medium(3) scale ships suffer a -1 penalty to attacks if they performed a special action in Phase A.
- Damage equals difference between attack and defence rolls, plus Skill levels of additional weapons
- Damage can be reduced by target Skills such as armour and shields or by taking consequences

Phase D. Evasion & Escape

- Any ship may declare its intention to leave combat
- Escape is automatic if enemy ships choose not to oppose the attempt
- Ships declaring evasion only take part in Manoeuvre and Special Action phases
- To escape via FTL, ship must put 2+ zones between itself and pursuing ships
- Escape via SL requires ship to leave the sensor range of pursuing ships, barriers and Aspects etc can affect this

Phase E. Establish Initiative

- Determine initiative again as per step 3, then proceed to the start of step 4 again
- Repeat until conflict resolved

Ship Destruction

- Reduce either of a ship's Stress Tracks to zero to destroy a ship.
- Reducing Structural Stress to zero represents complete destruction of the ship.
- Reducing System Stress to zero the ship renders the ship an intact wreck.
- Crew can survive via evacuation attempts aided by survival suites, escape pods etc

Ship Conflict Quick Reference (Page 2)

Crew Evacuation

- Each crew member makes an evacuation check to escape ship destruction
- Some ship Skills make this automatic (see *Protected Crew Stations* Skill)
- Difficulty equals scale of the ship plus excess Stress from attack that caused destruction
- Evacuation check must exceed the difficulty or crew member goes down with the ship

What About the Players?

- Player characters may choose to take consequences instead of the ship taking Stress

In-flight Repair

- Requires a difficulty check using either: Character with Engineering or Starship Engineering Skills or Ship with *Repair System* Skill and *Auto-repair* stunt
- Both can be combined for a bonus (add Skill level as a bonus to the other)
- Only one attempt per consequence may be made
- Repair times and difficulties:
  - » Minor consequences take an afternoon at Great(+4) difficulty
  - » Major consequences take a few days at Fantastic(+6) difficulty
  - » Severe consequences take a few weeks at Legendary(+8) difficulty
  - » Extreme consequences cannot be repaired in-flight
- Extra shifts may be used to repair further consequences (if enough) or reduce the time taken for the repair
- Landing on a planet with atmosphere gains a +1

Repair Facilities

- Requires a resource roll against the consequence
- Repair times and resource difficulties:
  - » Minor consequences take a few hours at Good(+3) difficulty
  - » Major consequences take a few days at Superb(+5) difficulty
  - » Severe consequences take a few weeks at Fantastic(+6) difficulty
  - » Extreme consequences take a few months at Legendary(+8) difficulty
- Extra shifts may be used to repair further consequences (if enough) or reduce the time taken for the repair

Servicing

- Crew may make a maintenance resource check if they have failed a number of repair attempts
- Cost is normal resource difficulty, +1 for each failed repair attempt.

Ship Improvement

- Cannot change the scale of a ship, only change or upgrade its systems (Skills)
- Skill limit is the Skill point value of a ship the next scale size up
- Stunt and Aspect limits are also that of a ship the next scale size up
- Cost of adding/improving a Skill is 1 Skill point per character per Skill level
- Requires a resource Skill check vs the Skill level to be improved +2
- Skill pyramid must be maintained
- Extra shifts on the resource roll can be used to reduce time the improvement takes
- Offensive or defensive Skills difficulty is +1 if no crew are part of naval or security organisations
- Two Skills may be swapped at a cost of the higher Skill level of the two, extra shifts reducing time taken

Fleet Actions

- Conflicts on this scale are resolved using Skills such as the *Admiral* or *Leadership* Skills, or an organisations *Technology* or *Security* for initiative.
- Use fleet and scene Aspects and Aspects of the command ship
- Use minion rules (+1 bonus for 2-3, +2 for 4-6, +3 for 7-9, +4 for 10+)
- Represent a fleet as 5 Stress points for the first capital ship
- Add an additional Stress point for each additional capital ship or fighter wing

A FEW DAYS LATER, AT FEDERATION HEADQUARTERS . . .
A SHIP LIKE ALPHA-2 IS JUST WHAT THE FEDERATION NEEDS, HOGAN. WITH VASSAL'S FORCE-SHIELD FITTED, IT'LL BE THE MOST POWERFUL SHIP IN THE GALAXY.
AS LONG AS IT IS USED WISELY, SIR—TO REPEL AGRESSION. THAT'S WHAT THE PROTECTORS WOULD WANT.

APPENDIX THREE
Useful Tables

The Ladder

+8:	Legendary
+7:	Epic
+6:	Fantastic
+5:	Superb
+4:	Great
+3:	Good
+2:	Fair
+1:	Average
0:	Mediocre
-1:	Poor
-2:	Terrible
-3:	Abysmal

Running Conflicts

Once a conflict begins, follow this regular pattern.

1. Frame the scene
2. Establish initiative
3. Begin exchange
   a. Take actions
   b. Resolve actions
   c. Begin a new exchange

Time Increments

Instant
A few moments
Half a minute
A minute
A few minutes
15 minutes
Half an hour
An hour
A few hours
An afternoon
A day
A few days
A week
A few weeks
A month
A few months
A season
Half a year
A year
A few years
A decade
A lifetime
Generations
Centuries

Consequences

A **Minor** consequence reduces the hit by 2 stress

A **Major** consequence reduces the hit by 4 stress

A **Severe** consequence reduces the hit by 6 stress

An **Extreme** consequence reduces the hit by 8 stress

Degrees of Success

Effect	Description
0 shifts	**Minimal success** – The character pulled it off. It's neither pretty nor graceful, but it works, at least for now.
1 shift	**Notable success** – This is a clear-cut success. The character's result is solid, reliable, and while it may not be inspired, it is absolutely workmanlike.
3 shifts	**Significant success** – The success is sufficient enough to be noticeably well done, and will be of fine quality, very reliable and so on. A significant or better success can be said to generate spin (see below).
5 shifts	**Potent success** – Not only is the quality of the success remarkable, it may have some unexpected, secondary benefits, such as a deeper insight into a problem at hand.

The attacker wants to...	So he uses...	And the defender can use...
Wound or kill	Fists, Guns, Weapons	Fists, Athletics, Weapons
Deceive	Deceit	Resolve, Empathy
Scare	Intimidation	Resolve
Charm	Rapport	Resolve, Deceit
Force movement	Might	Might

Fire Intensity

0: The building is on fire, but the fire can be avoided.
1: Almost everything is on fire, and the heat is pressing in on you in waves.
2: Everything is on fire, and the flames lick up near you.
3: Inferno. There may well be nowhere to run, you have only moments to live.

Sample Weapon Effects

Ignore energy shields	shields do not absorb damage or consequences inflicted by this weapon or gun
Ignore Armour	armour does not absorb damage or consequences inflicted by this weapon or gun
Freeze	place a 'frozen' Aspect on target if the target is successfully hit and a Minor, Major or Serious consequence depending on the power of the weapon. Shields & Armour do help defend against the attack.
Burn	place a 'burning' Aspect on target if the target is successfully hit and a Minor, Major or Serious consequence depending on the power of the weapon. Shields & Armour do help defend against the attack.
Stun	place a 'stunned' Aspect on target if the target is successfully hit and a Minor, Major or Serious consequence depending on the power of the weapon. Shields do help defend against the attack
Explosive	Everything in the target zone is attacked by the explosive force of the weapon

Sample Radiation Levels

Example Radiation	Conseq.	Power
Unshielded experiment	Minor	Good
Radiation Grenade	Major	Great
Mini Nuke/Solar Flare	Severe	Fantastic
Nuke/Cosmic Rays	Extreme	Legendary

Explosive Fuses

d6-d6	Short Timer	Medium Timer	Long Timer
+3 to +5	**Explode**	**Explode**	**Explode**
+1 to +2	**Explode**	**Explode**	Not Yet
+0	**Explode**	Not Yet	Not Yet
-1 to -2	Not Yet	Not Yet	Not Yet
-3 to -5	*Dud?*	*Dud?*	*Dud?*

Blade & Projectile Armour

Blade & Projectile Armour -1

Can take 1 minor consequence before it is taken out / destroyed.

Blade & Projectile Armour -2

Can take 1 minor consequence and 1 major before it is taken out / destroyed.

Blade & Projectile Armour -3

Can take 1 minor consequence, 1 major, 1 Severe before it is taken out / destroyed.

Assault Armour -3

Can take 1 minor consequence, 1 major, 1 Severe and 1 Extreme before it is taken out / destroyed.

Energy Shields

Energy Shield -1

Can take 1 minor consequence before it is taken out / destroyed.

Energy Shield -2

Can take 1 minor consequence and 1 major before it is taken out / destroyed.

Energy Shield -3

Can take 1 minor consequence, 1 major and 1 Severe before it is taken out / destroyed.

Assault Energy Shield -3

Can take 1 minor consequence, 1 major, 1 Severe and 1 Extreme before it is taken out / destroyed.

Explosive Area

Explosive Area	Force Cost	Complexity Improvement
Military Grade	Legendary	Epic
2	Epic	
Home made	Superb	Superb
1	Great	
Mining Explosive	Fantastic	Fantastic
1	Superb	Hair Trigger
Plastic Explosive	Epic	Fantastic
2	Fantastic	Hair Trigger
Nuke	Legendary	Epic
2	Legendary x 2*	

Nukes are shown for Starship scale effects only

Size class and Scale summary

CLASS	SCALE	Examples
10	**Galactic**	Anything larger than a solar system (nebula, galaxy, cluster, supercluster)
9	**Star Relic**	Huge astro-engineering projects (Dyson spheres, Ringworlds etc) / Solar systems, Vast life form – possibly genetically engineered to provide living space
8	**Planetary**	Planets / Large moons / Planet sized colony ships / Large fleet, large star faring life form like a space bourne version of the Sargasso Sea or a living intelligent world
7	**Colossal**	Large space stations / small moons / Smaller colony ships / Large cities / Small fleet, large star creatures,
6	**Enormous**	Vast Starships (large capital ships - carriers, battleships) / Small cities / Medium space stations / Squadron of fighters or wing of Large Starships, large star creatures
5	**Huge**	Large Starships (small to medium capital ships – cruisers, frigates, destroyers, large freighters) / Huge ground installations (star ports, military complexes, towns) / Small space stations, medium star creatures, large based lifeforms like an intelligent forest
4	**Large**	Small Starships (medium freighters, gunboats, patrol ships) / Large ground installations (housing / office blocks), small star creatures, giant size land creatures or assault vehicles
3	**Medium**	Small ground installations & houses / scouts, fighters, small freighters / Large vehicles (major surface ships, landcrawlers), large land creatures
2	**Small**	Small vehicles (cars, boats, military vehicles) / people (humans, monsters, larger creatures)
1	**Tiny**	Anything smaller than a human

Organization Scale

CLASS	SCALE
10	**Galactic** A vast civilisation spanning a galaxy or beyond
9	**Star Empire** A star empire with many star systems and enormous resources or intergalactic organisation
8	**Interplanetary** Multiple worlds – a small star faring civilisation or megacorporation spread across many star systems and possibly galaxies
7	**Colossal** A whole world, or colossal megacorporation spread across many worlds
6	**Enormous** An enormous continent of millions, an enormous megacorporation spread across several worlds
5	**Huge** A huge region of hundreds of thousands to millions, a huge corporation
4	**Large** A large town or organisation of tens to hundreds of thousands
3	**Medium** A medium company, organisation or town of a few thousand of people
2	**Small** A large settlement, or small company of a few hundred or so people
1	**Tiny** A company or village or organisation of around 50-100 people

Art: Performing to Affect the Mood

Factor	*Notes*	*Mod.*
Adding to a mood	If the room has an existing mood, adding an additional mood is a little harder.	+1
Changing a mood	If the new mood is going to replace an existing mood (either by design, or because it's actively contradictory to the existing mood), it's more difficult.	+3
Distractions	A noisy room or other activities will make it hard to focus on the performance.	+1
Major Distractions	It takes active effort to pay attention to the performance, such as when the performer is in a large, active area with many distractions.	+3
Total Distractions	There's no reason for anyone to be paying attention to the performance, such as on a battlefield.	+5

Athletics: Climbing Height Difficulty

Height	**Base Difficulty**
Short	Mediocre (+0)
Medium	Fair (+2)
Long	Great (+4) *
Extreme	Fantastic (+6) *

* (1, 2) Climbs of this length are Athletics restricted by Endurance unless the character has the ability to rest occasionally

Athletics: Taking a Fall

Fall	**Height**	**Base Difficulty**	**Consequence**
Short	Up to 20ft	Fair (+2)	Minor
Medium	Up to 40ft	Great (+4)	Moderate
Long	Can see the ground clearly	Fantastic (+6)	Severe
Extreme	Is that a house?	Can't be attempted without "Safe Fall" Stunt, page 151	Taken Out

Driving: Terrain Effects on Movement

Urban / Woodland	-1
Forest / Hills	-2
Swamp / Jungle / Mountains	-3
Highway	+1

Endurance: Health

Endurance	**Health**
Average+	+1
Good+	+2
Superb+	+3

Resolve: Composure

Resolve	**Comp.**
Average+	+1
Good+	+2
Superb+	+3

Burglary: Lock Difficulties

Front Door, Simple Padlock:	Mediocre
Quality Padlock, Office Door:	Average
Security Door:	Fair
Prison Cell:	Good
Safety Deposit Box, Cheap Safe:	Great
Expensive Safe:	Superb
Bank Vault:	Fantastic

Stealth: Environmental Bonuses

Bonus	**Environment**
+4	Pitch black, no visibility
+2	Dark, smoke, thick fog, no clear line of sight, greatly diminished visibility
0	Dim lighting, cluttered line of sight.
-2	Good Lighting, clear line of sight
-4	Bright lighting, clear area

FTL Drive: Navigational Misses

Missing the target by...	Causes...
1	A Minor consequence to the ship and location
2-3	A Major consequence to the ship and location
4—5	A Severe consequence to the ship and location
6 or more	An Extreme consequence to the ship and location

Might: Breaking Things

Mediocre:	Paper or glass. Why are you rolling?
Average:	Flimsy wood. Why are you rolling?
Fair:	Cheap wood broken with the grain; bamboo, some light plastics.
Good:	Non-reinforced wooden board, like a pine two-by-four, or an interior door.
Great:	Strong wood, hardwood boards, exterior door.
Superb:	Reinforced wood, heavy door.
Fantastic:	Security door.
Epic:	Bending prison bars (an inch or two).
Legendary:	Bank vault door, the door of a safe, Starship airlock

Might: Lifting Things

Might	Capacity	WF
Abysmal	10	0
Terrible	50	1
Poor	100	1
Mediocre	Small man (~150lbs)	2
Average	200	2
Fair	250	3
Good	300	3
Great	350	4
Superb	400	4
Fantastic	450	5
Epic	500	5
Legendary	600	6
Each +1	+100	+0.5

Resources: Workspaces Available

Skill	Work	Workplace
Academics	Academic Research	Library
Science	Lab Work	Lab
Engineering	Gadgeteering	Workshop
Mysteries	Arcane Research	Arcane Library
Mysteries	Alien Research	Alien Archive
Mysteries	Artificing	Arcane Workshop

Resources: Travel Costs

Cost	Distance
Average	Anywhere within the current system
Fair	Any neighbouring star system
Good	Several star systems away
Great	Halfway across the current galaxy
Superb	Anywhere in the current galaxy
Fantastic	Any neighbouring galaxy
Epic	Up to several galaxies away
Legendary	Any point in the known Universe

Resources: Costs of Medical Aid

Aid Required	Cost
Restoring character from Extreme consequence to full health in a month	Fantastic
Restoring character from Severe consequence to full health in a week	Great
Restoring character from Major consequence to full health in a day	Fair
Restoring character from Minor consequence to full health in an hour	Mediocre
Curing Disease or poison	the power of the disease or poison is the cost

Science: Computer Hacking - Difficulties

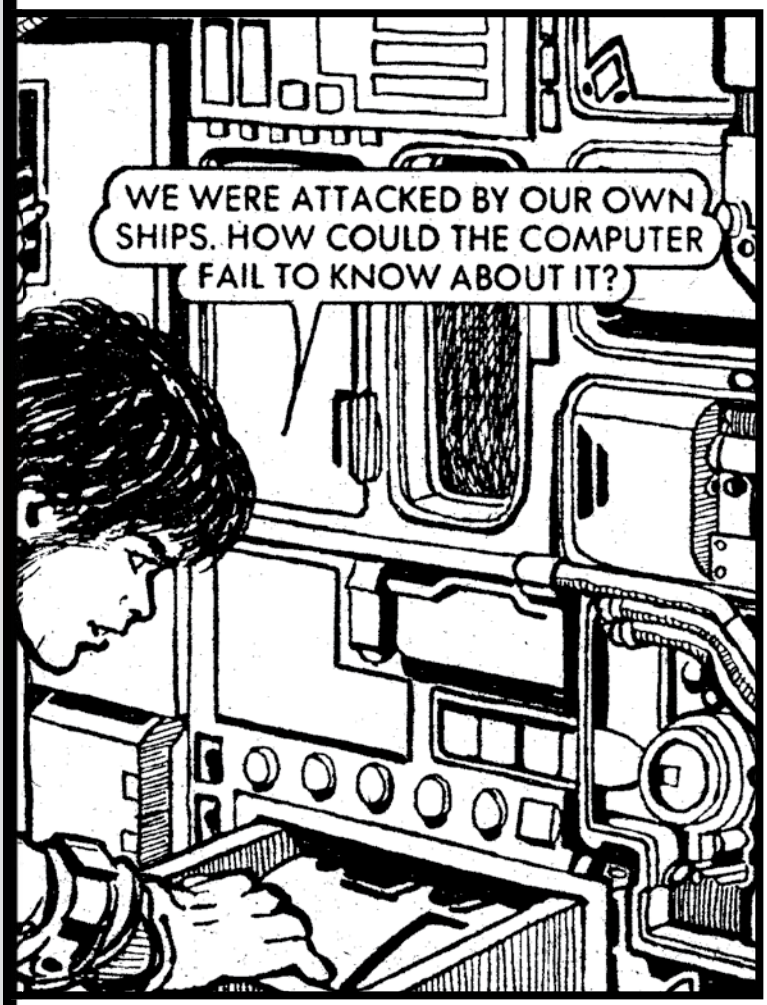
Difficulty	Type of System
Fair (+2)	Household systems & alarms, Basic handheld equipment
Good (+3)	VIP Home's systems & alarms, factory equipment
Great (+4)	Government systems & alarms, sensitive equipment
Superb (+5)	High security systems & alarms, security services equipment
Fantastic (+6)	Military security systems & alarms, military equipment

Science: Giving Medical Attention

Consequence	Difficulty to Reduce Time
Mild	Mediocre
Moderate	Fair
Severe	Great (requires Great level medical equipment or facility)
Extreme	Fantastic (requires Fantastic level Medical facility)

Science: Computer Hacking - Successes

Shifts	Extent of Success
0 shifts	The hacker got in but is only able to read and download information.
1 – 2 shifts	A simple change like altering the timing of a guard robot's patrol, closing or opening a security door, instructing a shuttle in the ship's landing bay to be prepped for take off.
3-4 shifts	A change involving some form of control such as turning off security camera's in an area, taking control of some automatic defences for a scene, opening a whole series of doors, turning off a tractor beam for a scene.
5+ shifts	Complete control of the system, whatever the system is capable of, without human approval is possible. However characters should be aware that human staff, crew or casual observers may report unusual activity and possibly discover the hacking. For each out of the ordinary action the hacker makes the system do, deduct 1 from the difficulty for a Perception Skill check by an observer or staff member. The difficulty is the Skill level of the computer system.



Ship System Skill Range

Skill Level	Range / Distance
Terrible	Anywhere within the current star system
Poor	Half way to the next star system
Mediocre	Any neighbouring star system
Average	Two or three star systems away
Fair	Several star systems away
Good	Halfway across the current galaxy
Great	Anywhere in the current galaxy
Superb	Any neighbouring galaxy
Fantastic	Up to several galaxies away
Epic	Countless galaxies away
Legendary	Any point in the known Universe

Space Terrain Types

Asteroid Field	Light: 1 Medium: 2 Dense: 3 (affects navigation, attacks structural stress track)
Corrosive Cloud	2 (damages structural stress track)
Dense Star-field	2 (affects navigation)
Dust Cloud	1 (affects sensors)
Ion Storm	3 (damages ship systems stress track)
Minefield	3 (attacks structural stress track)
Plasma Cloud	1 (affects sensors & ship systems track)
Plasma Storm	3 (attacks structural and ship systems stress tracks)
Planetary Ice Rings	1 (affects navigation)
Starship Wreckage or **Debris Field**	3 (affects navigation, sensors)

Ship Skill Stress Absorption

Skill Level	Consequences
Average(+1)	1 x Minor
Fair(+2)	1 x Minor, 1 x Major
Good(+3)	1 x Minor, 1 x Major, 1 x Severe

Ship Medical Facilities

Ship Systems Skill Level	Med-Bay Facility Stunts
Average(+1)	None
Fair(+2)	Medic
Good(+3)	Medic
Great(+4)	Medic, Doctor
Superb(+5)	Medic, Doctor
Fantastic(+6)	Medic, Doctor, Surgeon
Legendary(+8)	Medic, Doctor, Surgeon

Ship Weapon Ranges

Ship Scale	Weapon Range (zones)*
Medium (3)	1
Large (4)	2
Huge (5) +	4

Starship Conflict Sequence

1. **Frame The Scene**
2. **Detection**
3. **Establish Initiative**
4. **Begin Exchange**
   - » **Special Actions** (EWS / ECM, grappling, boarding, attempt to detect any still undetected targets)
   - » **Manoeuvres & Ramming Attempts**
   - » **Ranged Attack**
   - » **Evasion & Escape**
   - » **Establish Initiative** for next exchange with ships still in detection range

Base stress damage reduction by weapon type and defence system

Defence	Ablative Armour			Reflective Armour			Energy Shield		
Weapon	**Avg**	**Fair**	**Good**	**Avg**	**Fair**	**Good**	**Avg**	**Fair**	**Good**
Beam Weapon	0	0	0	-1	-2	-3	-1	-2	-3
EWS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Projectile Weapon	-1	-2	-3	0	0	0	-1	-2	-3
Plasma Weapon	-1	-2	-3	-1	-2	-3	-1	-2	-3
Exotic Weapon	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Ramming	-1	-2	-3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Torpedo Launcher	-1	-2	-3	0	0	0	-1	-2	-3
Unusual / Unspeakable Weapon	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*	n/a*

* Unusual super weapons inflict an automatic Severe consequence on all targets in the zone. Unspeakable weapons inflict an automatic Taken Out consequence on all targets in the zone. The Story Teller may allow a quickly modified Energy shield to reduce the type of consequence by one or more levels (for example Taken Out reduced to Extreme or Severe).

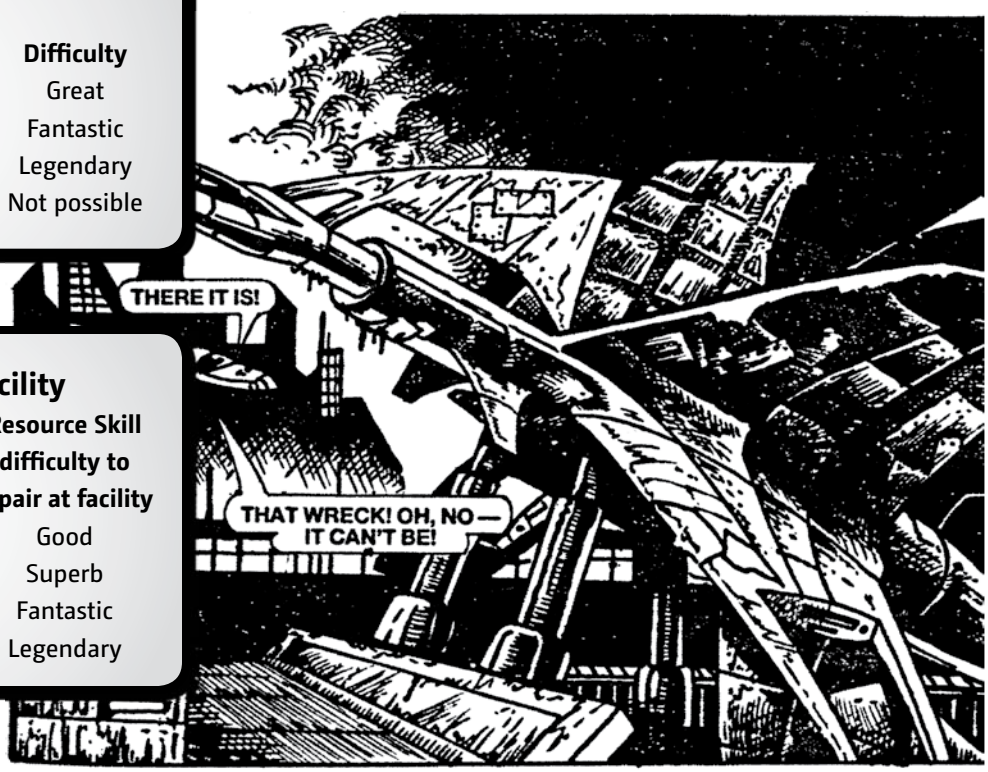
Exotic weapons may be of a nature that bypasses all types of defences however this is very powerful. It is recommended that the Story Teller considers the defences that are suitable against an exotic weapon before creating one or allowing the players to create one. For example they may be absorbed by reflective armour or energy shields (ray or energy type weapons) or ablative (projectile type weapons).

Starship Repair Timeframes

Consequence	Time to Repair	Difficulty
Minor	An afternoon	Great
Major	A few days	Fantastic
Severe	A few weeks	Legendary
Extreme	Not possible	Not possible

Starship Repair at Repair Facility

Level of Consequence	Time to Repair	Resource Skill difficulty to repair at facility
Minor	A few hours	Good
Major	A few days	Superb
Severe	A few weeks	Fantastic
Extreme	A few months	Legendary



Character Skills and Stunts

Academics
- *Languages*
  - Computer expert
    - Gift of tongues
  - Linguist
- *Memory*
  - Photographic memory
  - Studied recall
  - Walking library
- *Scholarship*
  - Dizzying intellect
  - It's academic
  - Scholar

Alertness
- *Reflexes*
  - Cut off
  - I'm on top of it
  - Ready for anything
  - Run interference
- *Vigilance*
  - Constant vigilance
  - Danger sense
  - Saw it coming
  - Take it all in

Art
- *Appreciation*
  - The artist's eye
- *Creation*
  - Moving performance
  - Virtuoso
- *Persona*
  - All the Galaxy's a stage
  - Poison words
  - Razor tongue
  - Stage presence
- *Reputation*
  - Commissions
  - Do you know who I am?
  - Weight of reputation

Athletics
- *Gymnastics*
  - Acrobat
  - Contortionist
  - Safe Fall
  - Slippery
- *Speed*
  - Fast as a Leopard
  - Faster then a Leopard
  - Marathon training
- *Uncommon Movement*
  - Equestrian
  - Human spider
  - Mighty leap

Burglary
- *Perspective*
  - Alarm sensibilities
  - Criminal mind
  - Trespass tempo
- *Technique*
  - Lock master
  - Mental blueprint
  - The big heist

Contacting
- *Companions*
  - Close contacts
  - Contact
  - Network of contacts
- *Connections*
  - I know a guy who knows a guy
  - Insider
  - Walk the walk
- *Reputation*
  - Big man
  - Big name
  - Big reputation
  - Talk the talk

Deceit
- *Confidence*
  - Big sucker
  - Con man
  - Sucker
  - The fix is in
- *Disguise*
  - Clever disguise
  - Disguise of the mind
  - Infiltrator
  - Master of disguise
  - Mimicry
- *Falsehood*
  - Clever facade
  - Takes one to know one
  - The honest lie

Drive
- *Vehicles*
  - Custom ride
  - Prototype vehicle
  - Vehicle mechanic
- *Tricks*
  - Defensive driving
  - One hand on the wheel
  - Turn on a dime
  - Unsafe at any speed

Empathy
- *Intuition*
  - Ebb and flow
  - Pre-emptive grace
  - The skeptic's ear
  - Track the soul
- *Insight*
  - A peek inside
  - Cold read
  - Heart's secret
  - Hit them where it hurts
  - Uncanny hunch

Endurance
- *Persistence*
  - Feel the burn
  - Face the pain
  - Last leg
  - Tireless
- *Recovery*
  - Bounce back
  - Death defiance
  - Developed immunities
- *Toughness*
  - Made of steel
  - Now you've made me mad
  - One hit to the body
  - Thick skinned

Engineering
- *Devices*
  - Computer engineer
  - Personal gadget
  - Universal gadget
- *Methods*
  - Architect of death
  - Demolitions
  - Grease monkey
  - Mister fix-it
  - Thump of restoration

Fists
- *Brawling*
  - Army of one
  - Brawler
  - Crippling blow
  - Dirty fighter
  - Fists of fury
  - Mix it up
  - Signature strike
  - Whatever's on hand
- *Kung Fu*
  - Bend like the reed
  - Brick breaker
  - Demoralising stance
  - Fist of death
  - Flow like water
  - Flying kick
  - Lethal weapon
  - Martial arts
  - Signature strike

Gambling
- *Luck*
  - Double or nothing
  - Gambling man
  - The Devil's own luck
- *Skill*
  - Gambling buddy
  - Know when to fold 'em
  - Never bluff a bluffer
  - Players club
  - Winnings

Guns
- *Aiming*
  - Long shot
  - Shot on the run
  - Stay on target
  - Trick shot
  - Zero G firefights
- *Ammunition*
  - Fast reload
  - One shot left
  - Rain of photons
- *Draw*
  - Lightning hands
  - Quick draw
  - Snap shot
- *Firepower*
  - Custom firearm
  - Gun-crazy
  - Two gun Joe

Intimidation
- *Control*
  - Infuriate
  - Subtle menace
  - The serpent's tongue
  - Unapproachable
- *Fear*
  - Aura of fear
  - Aura of menace
  - Fearsome gaze
  - Master of fear
  - Scary
  - Steely gaze
  - The promise of pain

Investigation
- *Contemplation*
  - Eye for detail
  - Scene of the crime
  - Uncanny hunch
- *Observation*
  - Focussed senses
  - Impossible detail
  - Lip reading
  - Quick eye

Leadership
- *Military Command*
  - Admiral
  - Fleet Commander
  - Legendary Commander
  - Quick decisions under fire
  - Squadron Leader
- *Followers*
  - Lieutenant
  - Minions
  - Personal Conspiracy
  - Reinforcements
- *Law*
  - Legal eagle
  - World Court
- *Organisations*
  - Born leader
  - Centre of the Web
  - Emperor, President or Tyrant
  - Funding
  - Hero
  - Instant functionary
  - Master diplomat
  - Ubiquity

Might
- *Force*
  - Herculean strength
  - Piledriver
  - Unbound
  - Unstoppable
- *Wresting*
  - Body toss
  - Hammerlock
  - Wrestler

Mysteries
- *Artefacts*
  - Artificer
  - Personal Artefact
  - Rare Artefact
- *Hypnosis*
  - Enthral
  - Hypnotic speech
  - Mesmerist
  - Mind's shadow
- *Secrets*
  - Fortune teller
  - Herbal remedies
  - Palm reader
  - Secrets of the Arcane / Aliens
- *Spirits*
  - Psychic
  - Spirit companion
  - Voices from the beyond
  - Words on the mind

Pilot
- *Flight*
  - Death from above
  - Flawless navigation
  - Fly by night
  - Flying ace
  - Flying jock
  - Walk away from it
- *Planes*
  - Personal aircraft
  - Plane mechanic
  - Prototype aircraft

Rapport
- *Charisma*
  - Best foot forward
  - Five minute friends
  - Intergalactic
  - Ladies' man / "it" girl
- *Wordplay*
  - Blather
  - Heart on my sleeve
  - Smooth over
  - The right questions

Resolve
- *Cool*
  - Aplomb
  - Cool customer
  - Right place, right time
  - Smooth recovery
  - Unflappable
- *Tenacity*
  - Driven
  - Inner strength
  - Steel determination
  - Still standing
  - Unyielding

Resources
- *Advantage*
  - Grease the wheels
  - Money talks
- *Comfort*
  - Headquarters
  - Home away from home
  - Lair
  - Stately pleasure dome
  - Trusted employee
- *Liquidity*
  - Best that money can buy
  - Long term investment
  - Money is no object

Science
- *Computers & Hacking*
  - Computer specialist
  - Hacker
  - Web head
- *Medicine*
  - Doctor
  - Forensic medicine
  - Medic
  - Surgeon
- *Theory*
  - Mad science
  - Scientific genius
  - Scientific invention
  - Theory in practice
  - Weird science

Sleight of Hand
- *Distractions*
  - Bump and grab
  - Cool hand
  - Sucker punch
- *Showmanship*
  - Juggler
  - Legerdemain
  - Master of illusion
  - Stage magic

Starship Engineering
- *In Action*
  - Cut the limiters
  - Just hit it
  - More power!
  - We need it now
- *In Drydock*
  - Jury rig
  - Recycle
  - Space monkey

Starship Gunnery
- *Marksmanship*
  - Critical hit
  - Pinpoint targeting
  - She's in my sights
- *Space Combat*
  - Barrage fire
  - Expert reloading
  - Snap shot
  - Volley fire

Starship Pilot
- *Clever Tricks*
  - Escape artist
  - Fighter ace
  - Fighter jock
  - Threading the needle
- *Getting Home*
  - Crash test pilot
  - Expert navigator
  - Hold it together
- *Ships*
  - Personal ship
  - Prototype ship
  - Ship mechanic

Starship Systems
- *Duties*
  - Medical officer
  - Science officer
- *Technologies*
  - Communications
  - Divert power
  - Flight deck
  - Mining / salvage
  - Sensors
  - Shields
  - Teleport
  - Tractor beam

Stealth
- *Hide*
  - Deadly shadows
  - In plain sight
  - Master of shadows
  - Shadowed strike
- *Retreat*
  - Quick exit
  - Vanish
- *Skulk*
  - Hush
  - Lightfoot
  - Like the wind

Survival
- *Beasts*
  - Call of the wild
  - Creature companion
  - Creature friend
  - King of the beasts
- *Orientation*
  - Breaking it in
  - Due north
  - Hands free
  - Hell bent
  - Ride anything
  - Tracker

Weapons
- *Proficiency*
  - Flawless parry
  - Riposte
  - Turnabout
  - Zero G combat
- *Thrown*
  - Catch
  - Good arm
  - Ricochet
- *Weaponry*
  - Anything goes
  - Close at hand
  - Weapon of destiny
  - Weapons of the Galaxy

Alien / Monster Skills and Stunts

Additional Skills & Stunts

Absorb Energy
- Absorb energy weapons
- Absorb heat
- Absorb kinetic weapons
- Absorb light
- Absorb radiation
- Distance drain
- Energy drain
- Energy boost
- Life drain
- Mass drain
- Sap

Barb Thrower

Exude Energy
- Cold
- Flames
- Halo of destruction
- Lightning
- Radiation
- Radiation blast
- Ranged energy
- Raw energy

Fly
- Flight

Mimic

Ooze

Pheromones

Stretchy

Toxic
- Halo of destruction
- Spit toxin
- Toxic breath
- Toxic weapon
- Toxic blood

Additional Stunts for General Skills

Alertness
- Active sonar
- Eagle eyes
- Enhanced hearing
- Enhanced vision
- Extra sensory digits
- Heightened smell
- Sixth sense

Athletics
- Fast
- Gills
- Jump
- Lightning fast
- Spider feet
- Water walking

Endurance
- Extreme conditions
- Extreme habitat
- Hard hide
- Outer shell
- Protection
- Regeneration
- Quills

Fists
- Claws
- Go for the throat
- Jaws
- Tail
- Tentacles

Intimidation
- Horrific
- Oversized

Stealth
- Deceptive
- Small

Survival
- Melanomorph

Science or Engineering
- Supermind

Psionic Skills

Empathic Talent

Mind Control
- Dominate mind
- Mental shield

Mental Bolt
- Mental blast

Postcognition

Telekinesis
- Feather touch
- Move self
- Move heavy loads

Telepathy
- Probe

Career Types

Civilian
- Expenses
- Funds
- Small ship
- Ticket to travel
- Travel in style

Diplomat
- Direct line
- Embassy
- Embassy funds
- Favour
- Introduction
- Protocol

Explorer
- Interesting location
- Maps
- Scout Corps Gear
- Scout ship

Merchant
- Merchant funds
- Small ship
- Ticket to travel

Military
- Access to restricted equipment
- Access to weapons
- Covering fire
- Heavy weapons officer
- Officer
- Sniper
- Supply officer
- Support

Miner / Scavenger
- Maps
- Mining & salvage equipment
- Mining or salvage kit
- One last score

Native
- For justice!
- Legendary artefact
- Lucky artefact
- Noble cause

Pirate / Rebel
- Access to pirated goods
- Access to restricted equipment
- Access to secret organisation resources
- Access to weapons
- Member of a secret organisation
- Smell authority

Sci-Tech
- Access to labs
- Lab requisitions
- Major gadget
- Sci-tech

Security
- Access to a ship
- Access to restricted equipment
- Access to weapons
- Backup
- Cover me!
- Local office resources
- The law

Starship Skills

General Ship Skills

Advanced sensor suite
- Military sensor suite
- Track FTL

Cargo hold
- Cargo jettison plates
- Cargo pods
- Dangerous cargo containment
- Livestock area
- Passenger quarters
- Stasis pods

Flight bay
- Carrier bays
- Fighter recovery
- Quick launch

Grappling system
- Fighter retrieval

Mining Equipment
- Precision mining
- Processing facility
- Salvage

Repair system
- Auto repair
- Repair drones

Salvage system
- Mining
- Patch it up
- Salvage alien technology
- Salvage hazardous items

Ships systems
- Advanced med-bay
- A.I. Auto-pilot
- Enhanced communications
- Hardened ship systems
- Knowledge base
- Long term life support
- Reactor shielding
- Research computer
- Sensor probes

Stardrive technology

Manoeuvre
- Afterburner
- Atmospheric entry
- Hit & run
- Show your better side

Star drive
- Blind jump
- Overdrive

Offensive Ship Skills

Beam weapon
- Overload
- Point defence
- Split fire

Electronic warfare suite
- Advanced EWS
- Broadband guidance jamming

Exotic weapon
- Split fire
- Very exotic

FTL inhibitor
- System blockade

Marine facilities
- Assault capsules
- Assault marines
- Boarding capsules

Plasma weapon
- Overload
- Split fire
- System suppression

Projectile weapon
- Anti-fighter barrage
- Auto-loader
- Guided missiles
- Point defence
- Rapid fire
- Split fire

Targeting computer
- Pinpoint targeting

Torpedo launcher
- Torpedoes away

Unusual super weapon
- Planet buster

Defensive Ship Skills

Ablative armour

Cloaking system

Energy shield
- Overload
- Radiation protection

Hardened structure
- Reinforced prow

Mine dispenser
- Mine fusillade
- Repel boarders

Protected crew stations

Reflectiv-e armour

Shroud generator
- Advanced shroud

I WASN'T EXPECTING TROUBLE FROM A BUNCH OF SCIENTIFIC EGGHEADS . . . AND I WAS WRONG . . .
KAYN, WE WERE WARNED YOU MIGHT ARRIVE. SURRENDER OR TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES.
WAR-MEKS!

APPENDIX FOUR
Sheets

PLAYER:

CHARACTER:

CAREER:

STARBLAZER ADVENTURES

THE ROCK AND ROLL SPACE OPERA ADVENTURE GAME

ASPECTS

RANK

SKILLS

Legendary (+8)

Epic (+7)

Fantastic (+6)

Superb (+5)

Great (+4)

Good (+3)

Fair (+2)

Average (+1)

FATE PTS

REFRESH

STUNT

EFFECT

STUNTS

STATUS

Physical Stress

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Composure Stress

Consequences

MINOR -2

MAJOR -4

SEVERE -6

EXTREME -8

ITEM

EFFECT

STUFF

NOTES

REFERENCE

Spend a Fate Point to...

- Get +1 on any roll
- Make a Declaration
- Invoke or Tag an Aspect for +2, reroll, or use alternate Skill
- Power some Stunts
- Refuse Compulsion
- Compel opponent Aspect

Earn Fate Points by...

- Accepting Compels
- Good or entertaining roleplay

Each Shift can...

- Reduce the time to do a task
- Increase quality of result
- Increase subtlety of result
- Increase attack stress

Spin (3 shifts) allows...

- +1 or -1 on very next roll that happens
- Creating a Sticky Aspect with a successful Manoeuvre or other effort

Effort = Skill + Dice

Shifts = Effort - Difficulty or Opposing Effort

SHIP NAME:

SHIP TYPE:

SHIP SCALE:

STARBLAZER ADVENTURES

THE ROCK AND ROLL SPACE OPERA ADVENTURE GAME

STATUS

Structural Stress

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Systems Stress

Consequences (Armour)

MINOR -2 _____

MAJOR -4 _____

SEVERE -6 _____

Consequences (Shields)

MINOR -2 _____

MAJOR -4 _____

SEVERE -6 _____

Consequences (Ship)

MINOR -2 _____

MAJOR -4 _____

SEVERE -6 _____

EXTREME -8 _____

ASPECTS

REFERENCE

Weapon Ranges

- Medium(3) scale ships: 1 zone
- Large(4) scale ships: 2 zones
- Huge(5) scale ships or larger: 4 zones

Conflict Sequence

- Frame the Scene
- Detection
- Establish Initiative
- Begin Exchange

Exchange Sequence

- Special Actions & Manoeuvres
- Manoeuvring
- Ramming
- Ranged Attacks
- Evasion & Escape
- Re-Establish Initiative
- Begin Next Exchange

SKILLS

RANK

Legendary (+8)

Epic (+7)

Fantastic (+6)

Superb (+5)

Great (+4)

Good (+3)

Fair (+2)

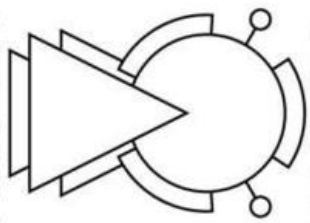
Average (+1)

STUNTS

STUNT	EFFECT

SHIP DESIGN

FATE PTS



REFRESH

B

ORGANISATION:

ORG. TYPE:

ORG. LEADER:

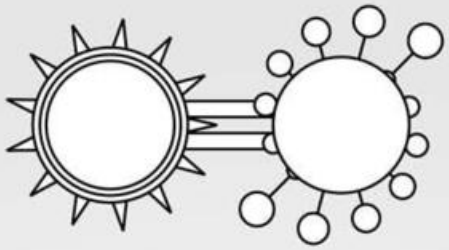
STARBLAZER ADVENTURES

THE ROCK AND ROLL SPACE OPERA ADVENTURE GAME

REFERENCE

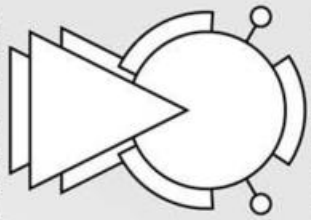
Number of Aspects = Scale
Difficulty to Administrate = Scope
Number of Skill Points = Scale x 4
Fate Points = 10 - Number of Stunts
Refresh = 10 - Number of Stunts

SCALE



SCOPE

FATE PTS



REFRESH

SKILLS

RANK

Legendary (+8)
Epic (+7)
Fantastic (+6)
Superb (+5)
Great (+4)
Good (+3)
Fair (+2)
Average (+1)

ASPECTS

STUNTS

STUNT | EFFECT

STATUS

Physical Stress

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Composure Stress

Consequences

MINOR -2
MAJOR -4
SEVERE -6
EXTREME -8

HOLDINGS

HOLDING OR RESOURCE | QUALITIES

BACKGROUND

B

ORGANISATION: Star Patrol

ORG. TYPE: Galactic Police

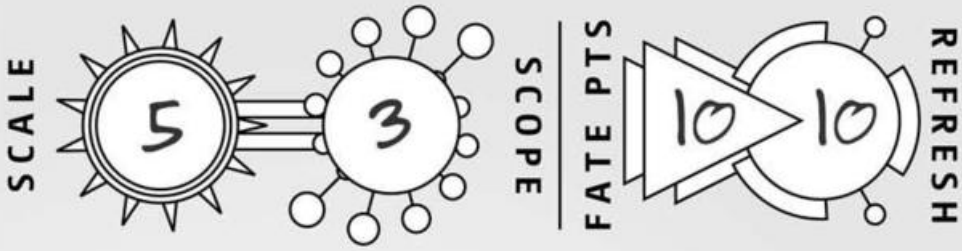
ORG. LEADER:

STARBLAZER ADVENTURES

THE ROCK AND ROLL SPACE OPERA ADVENTURE GAME

REFERENCE

Number of Aspects = Scale
Difficulty to Administrate = Scope
Number of Skill Points = Scale x 4
Fate Points = 10 - Number of Stunts
Refresh = 10 - Number of Stunts



SKILLS

RANK	
Legendary (+8)	
Epic (+7)	
Fantastic (+6)	
Superb (+5)	
Great (+4)	
Good (+3)	Arms (Officers)
Fair (+2)	Information (Core Worlds), Arms (Fleet), Resources (Outposts), Technology, Security
Average (+1)	Control (Core Worlds), Communications, Sway (Fringe Worlds), Information (Fringe Worlds)

ASPECTS

* Brave to the Last Man
* Stretched Resources
* Make Do With Anything
* Best Damn Pilots in the Galaxy
* Far-reaching Contacts

STUNTS

STUNT	EFFECT

STATUS

Physical Stress

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☒
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☒ ☒ ☒

Composure Stress

Consequences

MINOR -2
MAJOR -4
SEVERE -6
EXTREME -8

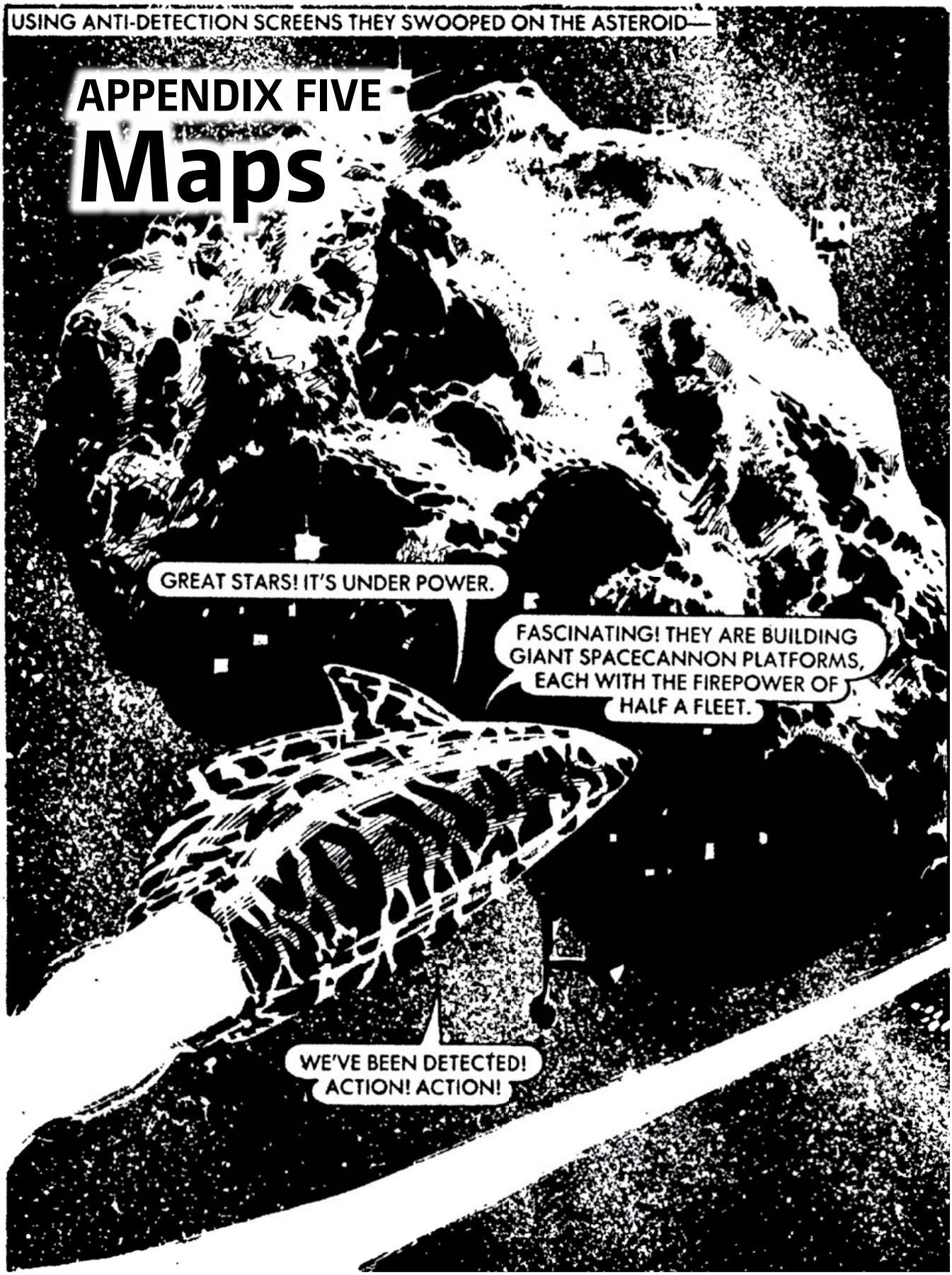
HOLDINGS

HOLDING OR RESOURCE	QUALITIES
Mobile Carrier Group	Fortified, Secure, Mobile

BACKGROUND

Star Patrol is the backbone of the Galactic Security Forces, providing armed patrols and reassurance to the thousands of planets across the frontier and core worlds.

B


USING ANTI-DETECTION SCREENS THEY SWOOPED ON THE ASTEROID—
APPENDIX FIVE
Maps
GREAT STARS! IT'S UNDER POWER.
FASCINATING! THEY ARE BUILDING GIANT SPACECANNON PLATFORMS, EACH WITH THE FIREPOWER OF HALF A FLEET.
WE'VE BEEN DETECTED! ACTION! ACTION!

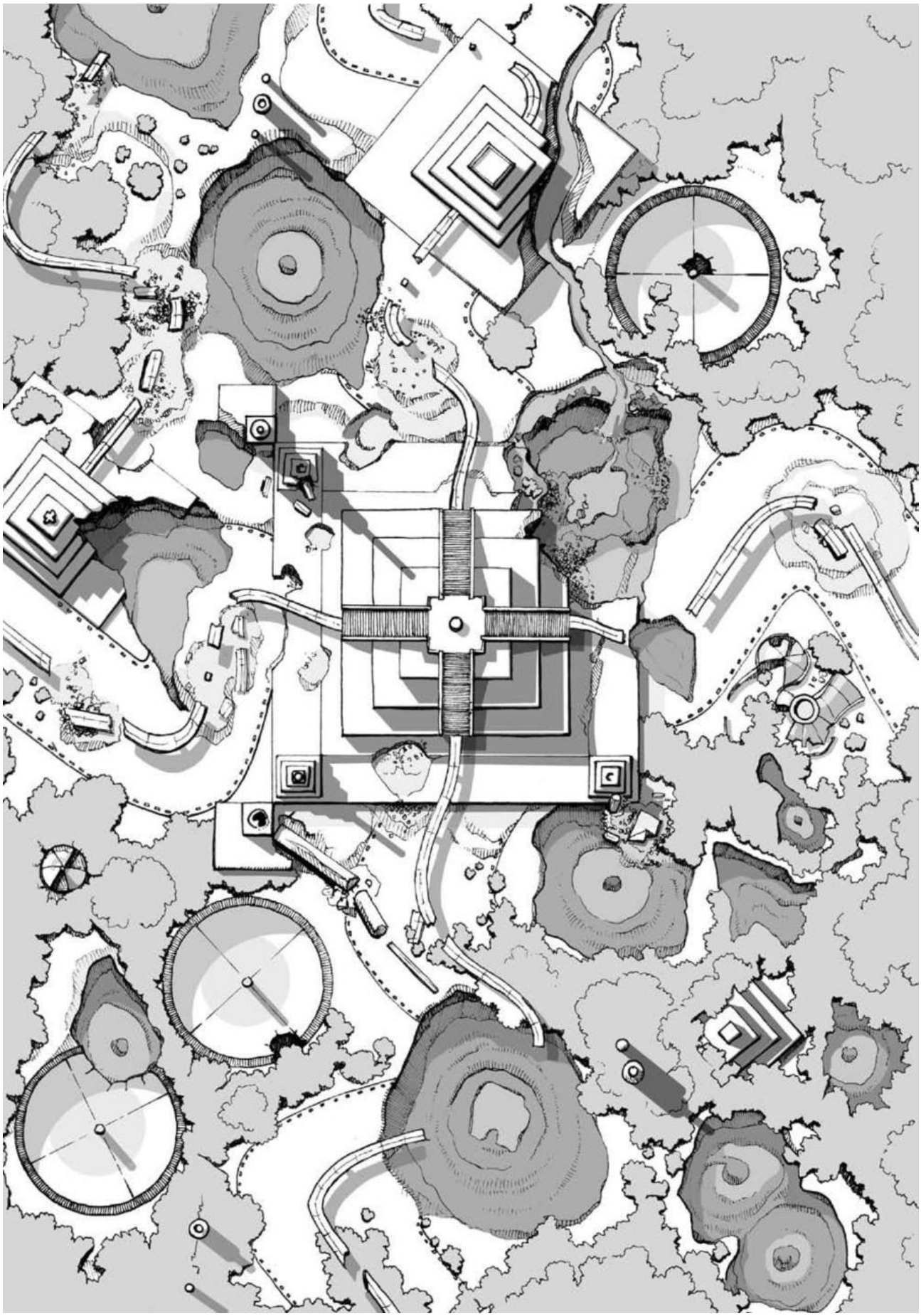


Illustration by David Donachie

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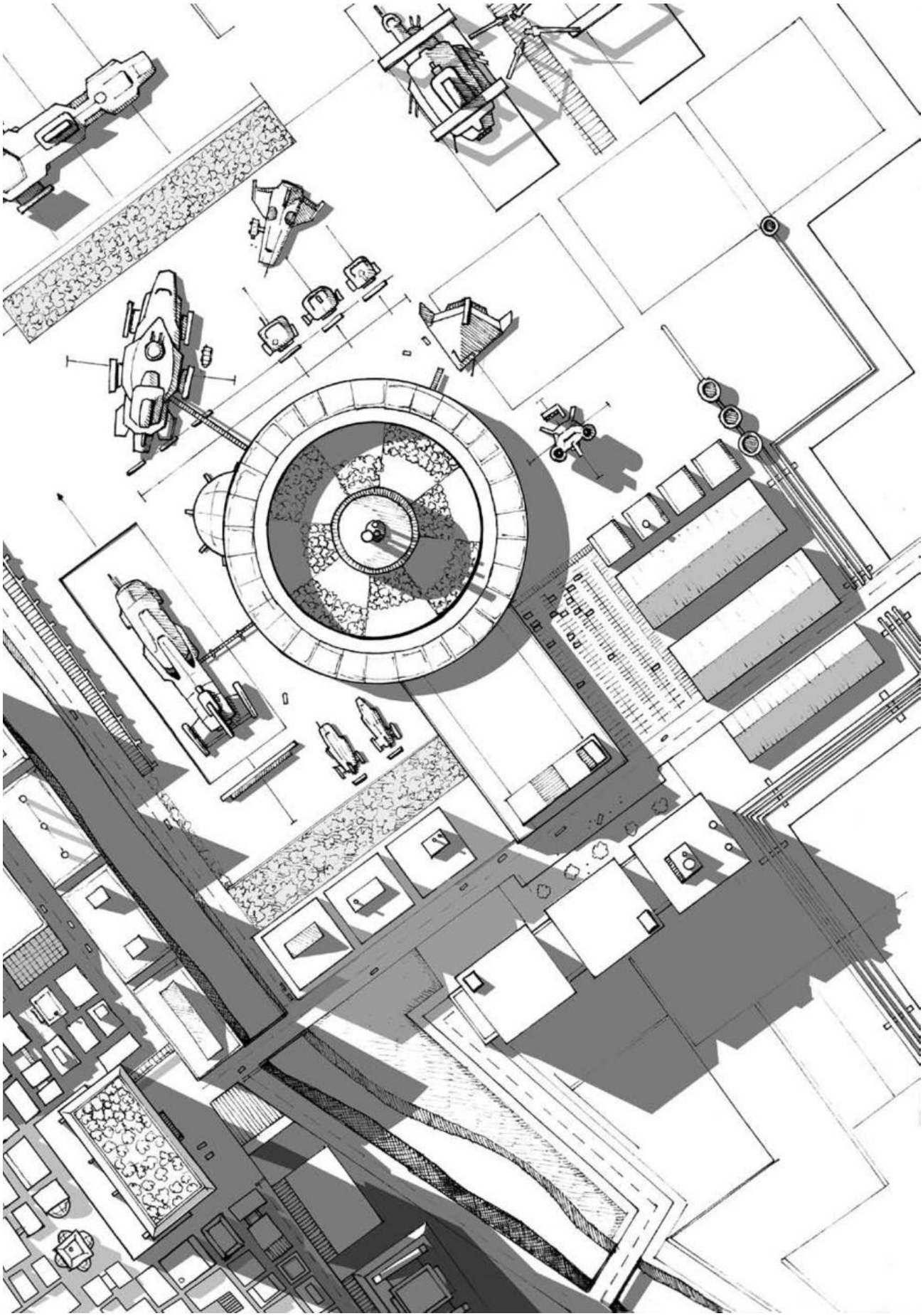

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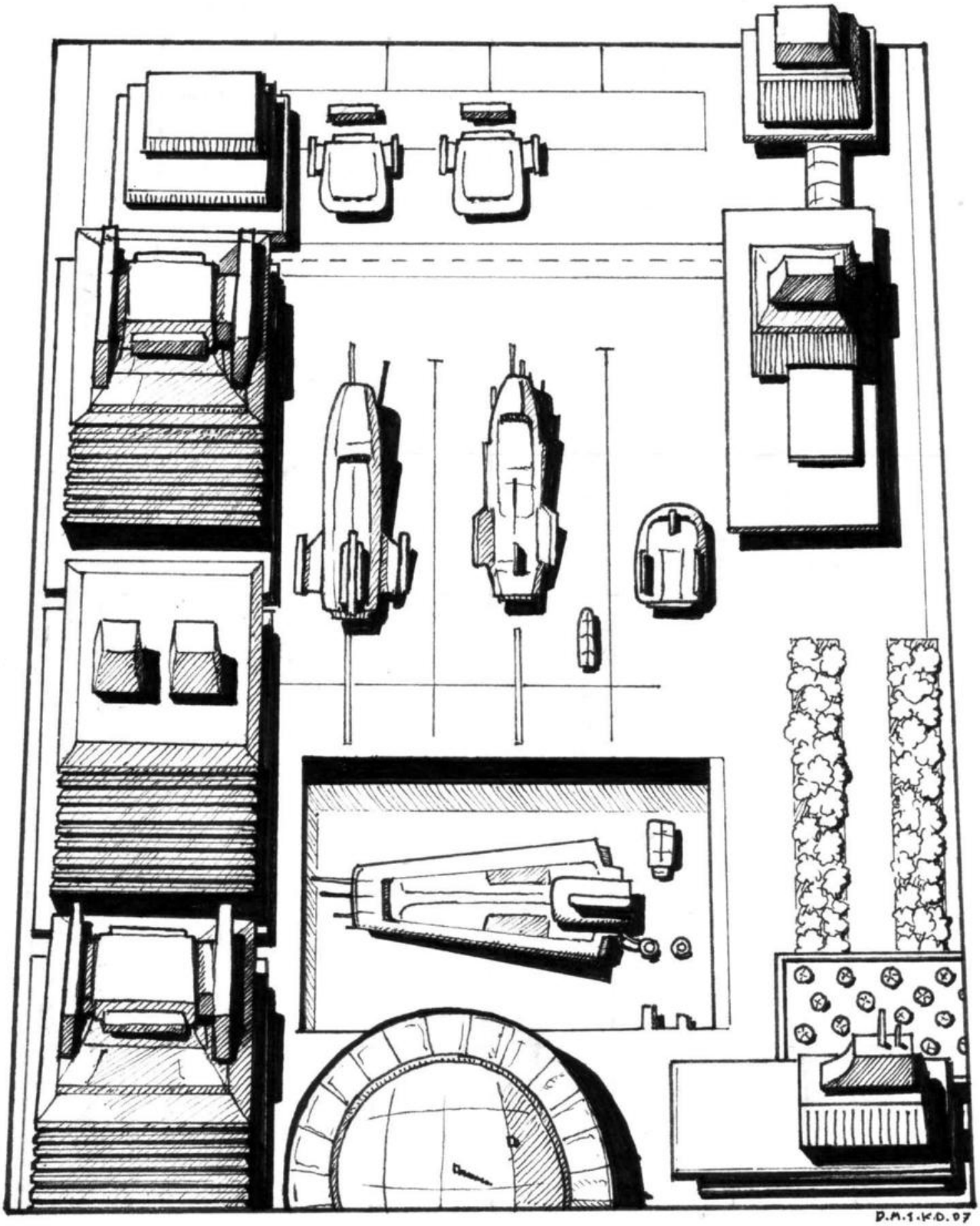

Illustration by David Donachie

[*Appendix 5: Maps*]▷

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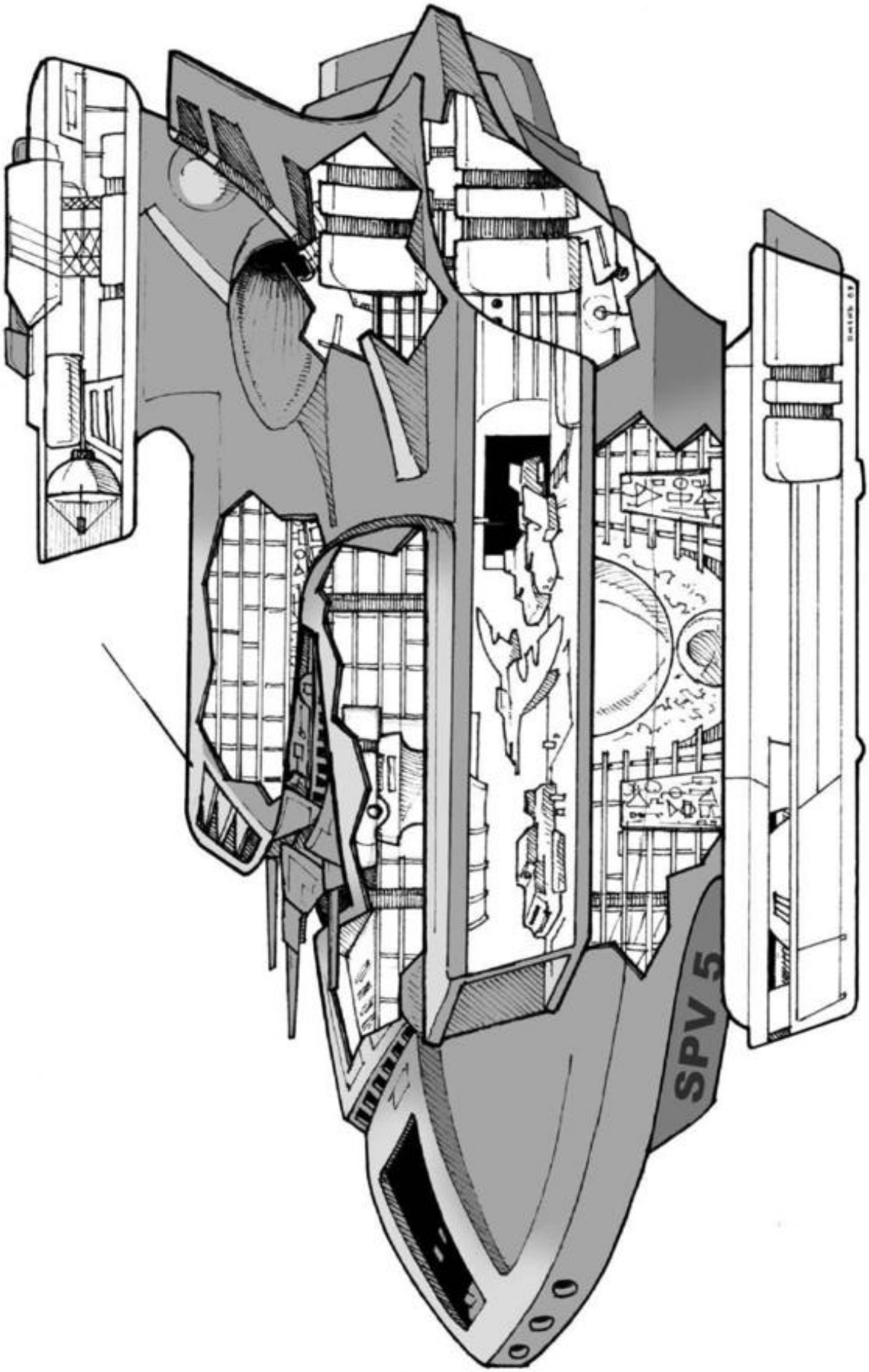


Illustration by David Donachie

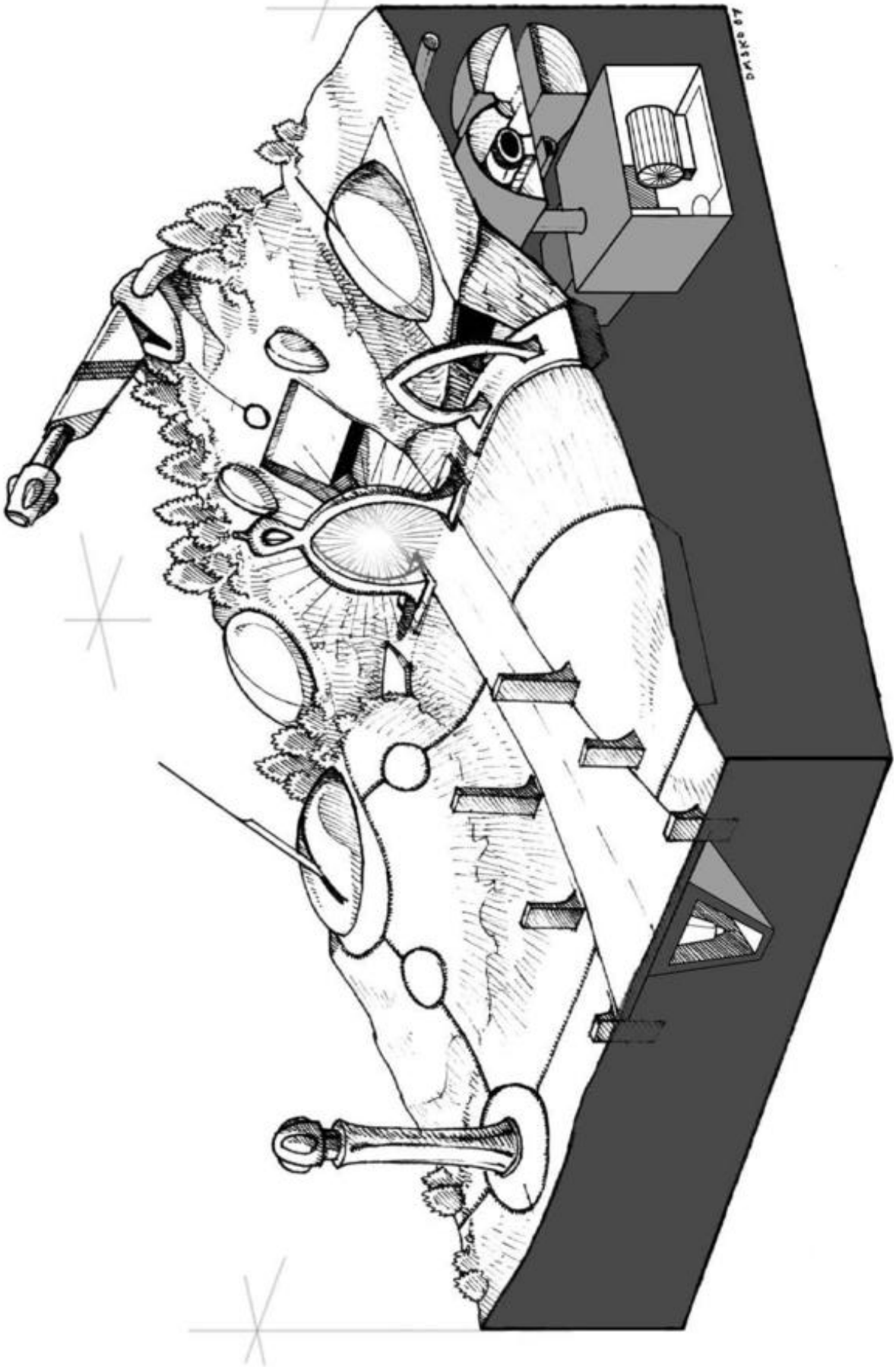


Illustration by David Donachie

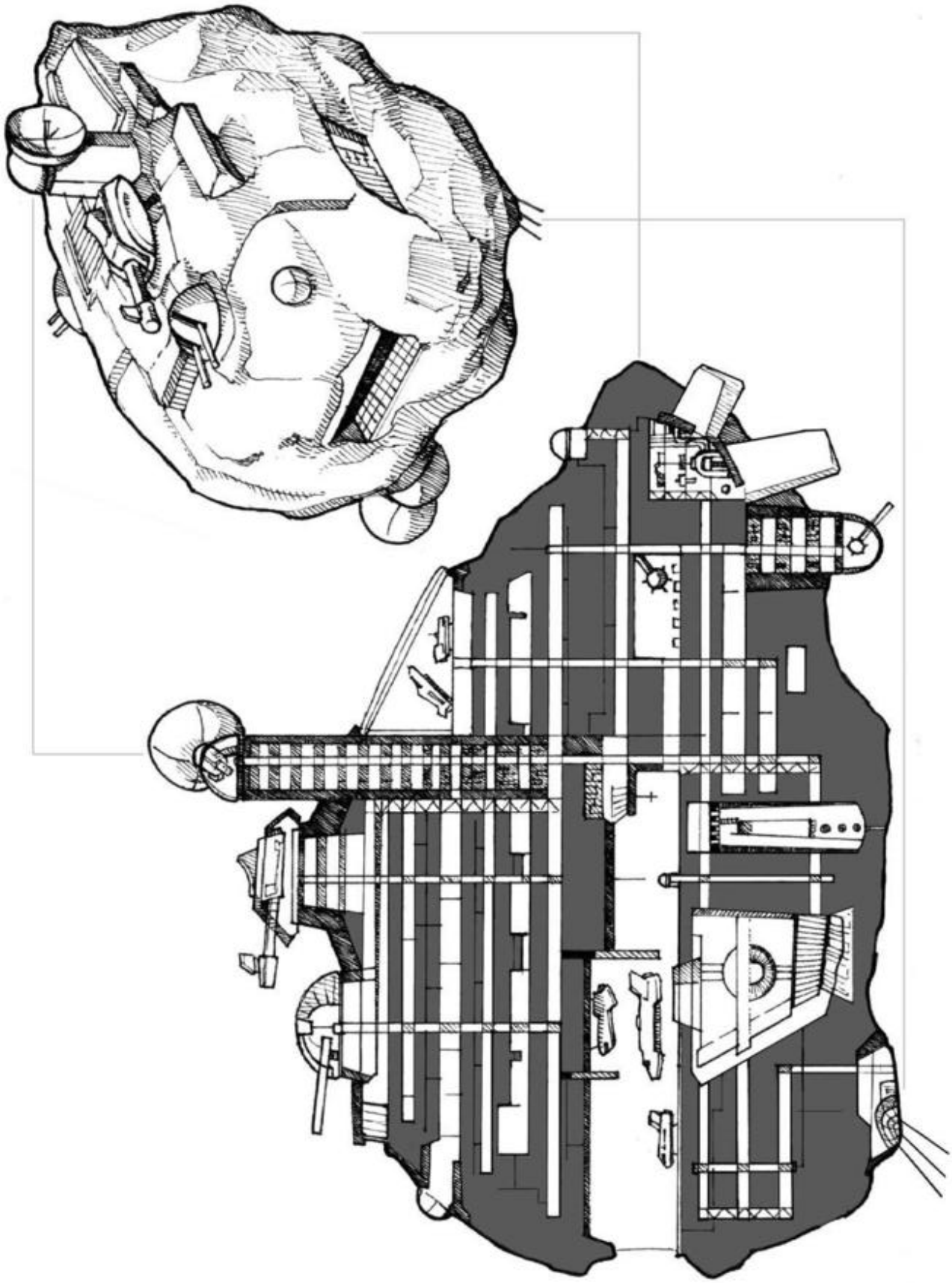
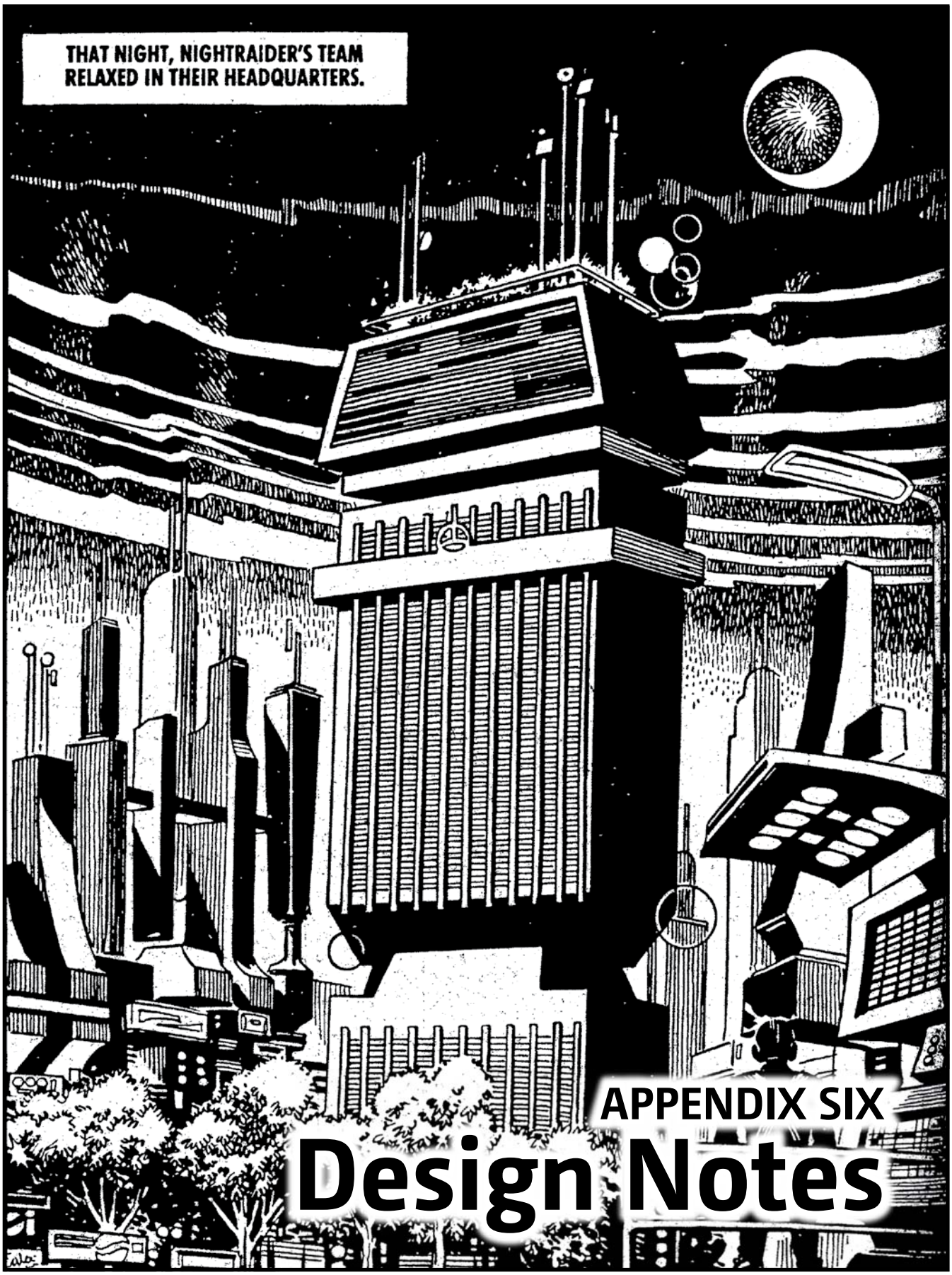


Illustration by David Donachie



APPENDIX SIX
Design Notes

Designer's Notes

(or what the hell was I thinking when I said yes to writing this!)

I could only buy so many games like this before I started wondering if I could do better. Well I was one of the lucky few and was given the opportunity to try my hand at writing ***Starblazer Adventures*** by my friend Angus at ***Cubicle 7 Entertainment***.

It all started back in the late 70's, with my passion for sci-fi kicked off by Star Wars and a long running fascination for video games began when I discovered Space Invaders at my brother Nick's sports club. In the late 70's my brother and his girlfriend Julie also introduced me to ***Dungeons & Dragons*** (the very first role-playing or adventure game) with a regular weekly game run by their best friend Mark Sylvester who became a long time gaming mentor for me.

During the 80's I was also a comic fan, my dad bringing back piles of DC and Marvel comics from my grandfather's bookstore, but I discovered British sci-fi properly when I found a small comic called ***Starblazer*** in the local newspaper shop. I loved the fact that a whole story was told in one comic and would sit for hours pouring over the artwork.

Over the years I started collecting role-playing and board games and gradually started to think what my own game might look like. Well, you're holding part of it, I say 'part' because there have been so many people involved in bringing this together and they've all helped make it far better than my idealistic first game could ever have been.

In the Autumn of 2006 I found out the licence for ***Starblazer*** was available and realised it would make a great role-playing game – not just for the wealth of stories but for the vast catalogue of artwork. I always thought most games suffered from the lack of decent artwork and the classic 70's and 80's colour covers of ***Starblazer*** just dripped space opera adventure. I'd got to know Angus Abranson from ***Cubicle 7*** a few years back whilst working with a TV company that flirted with the idea of making board games to promote a TV series and so mentioned ***Starblazer*** to Angus as a great opportunity. He simply said, "Sounds great! Do you want to write it?" In a fit of madness I said yes and started the long road to writing this book!

At this point I turned to my long term gaming friend Stuart Newman. We'd met through a mutual friend, Howard who used to host gaming nights at his house playing a home grown superhero game which we all loved. We'd already developed some of our own adventure or role-playing games for our own satisfaction, prototypes of board games and much more, but both of our lives were so busy we'd rarely had a chance to make something of them. Telling Stuart we were finally going to write a game together that would actually get published was a great moment – it made all those long nights and foolishly purchased games for 'research purposes' all worthwhile!

I then spent a few months researching the popular rules systems, wanting to stay clear of anything too math's heavy. I wanted to write something that people could pick and choose the best bits from, that wouldn't take forever to play and that would appeal to wide audience. I didn't want to write my own rules for this, being my first game it made a lot of sense to work with something that was already playtested and had a growing fanbase than start from scratch. It took a few months to decide but I eventually settled on the ***Fate*** rules. The community behind it was growing very fast, seemed so passionate and was constantly coming up with new 'mods' – rules, system tweaks, settings and more. Having gained a lot of love and attention in the guise of the ***Spirit of the Century*** pulp adventures game the ***Fate*** rules seemed just right for Starblazer which is essentially pulp stories in space. There'd already been a lot of discussion about sci-fi interpretations of the ***Fate*** rules and drawing on those discussions I was inspired to work on a whole space opera revision of ***Fate***. Little did I know the task ahead. I foolishly imagined I could edit the original ***Fate*** rules down to fit inside a reasonable sized book alongside all the new material we'd need to write dealing with Starships, empires, aliens and the ***Starblazer*** stories. The thing is ***Spirit of the Century*** is so well written it was very hard to cut stuff out, especially as it is perfect for new gamers just getting used to all the concepts. Even so I managed to pull together the best bits over the course of the last year and gradually combine them with everything we were writing.

I realised the book was getting bigger than the original 200 odd pages planned late in 2007. We had been due to release for Christmas 07 but in August it was clear this wasn't going to happen. There were too many new bits needing testing to see if they fitted in to the ***Fate*** system, the playtesters had only just really started and needed a couple of months at least to give us really valuable feedback and there were

so many cool concepts we still wanted to add to the game. We were also too late to inform the distributors and agents that the book was coming to allow them to generate sales for the release, so we took the decision to postpone till after Christmas and allow us time to get all the playtest feedback in, and make final changes.

Christmas came and went, the playtest reports came in, leading to several extensive re-writes of key chapters dealing with alien powers, giant creatures, Starships etc. All this is valuable time spent getting things right. Sure we could have put the game out earlier, but it would have been full of bugs and stuff that just didn't feel right. I knew the audience deserved better and kept at it – pushing the release back further still. Now bear in mind I wasn't at this 24/7 – work and life has a habit of getting in the way of stuff and I was just hitting an intensive period at ***Joystick Junkies*** on our clothing collection – it's pretty hard to write creatively in the evening when you're drained from the day. However the end, gradually, seemed to be in sight. At that time a friend told me that the Japanese have a saying that goes something like this, that when you've run 19 miles of a 20 mile race you're almost half way there. Funny, we churned out chapters regularly in the first few months but those last three chapters – did they take some finishing!

Now as I look back over the months I can see points where we could have speeded things up, time wasted on endless discussion of concepts or the time it took to get more people involved. There are times when I just didn't have the inspiration to write, or dozed off late at night trying to type just a few more sentences. Writing your first book is a huge undertaking, and I certainly couldn't have done it with out the help of Stuart, Douglas and David. I definitely could have planned how I put it all together better but it's easy to say these things in hindsight of course.
The whole experience has been daunting, challenging, exhausting, draining and yet exhilarating and inspiring. What sci-fi fan couldn't enjoy writing about vast ancient war machines, inscrutable aliens, brave fleet commanders and lost ruined Starports. It's been a dream to research, develop and write.
Will I write again? Of course, the challenge is all worthwhile, and if you like this book I think you'll love the next one.

Finally I hope you enjoy reading and playing ***Starblazer Adventures*** as much I have enjoyed putting it together for you. This book is the key to exploring some fabulous space opera adventures for us all to enjoy with our friends and I hope you'll join us on many intergalactic escapades!

ZENOS THE BANISHED RETURNED TO HIS NATIVE EARTH AFTER YEARS ALONE IN SPACE.
BACK HOME AGAIN—ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE LAW THIS TIME.
COUNCIL AWAITS HERO ZENOS
SOMA FORCES DESTROYED!
PEACE FOR

LAZER SECTION
6 LEVEL
NOW, CAPTAIN, THE LATEST IN WEAPONRY IF YOU WISH TO REPLACE YOUR REGULATION ISSUE WITH SOMETHING THAT HAS MORE KICK.
NOT WITH THIS STUFF. I WANT A HARDWARE ITEM THAT WILL REALLY KICK.
THAT'S MORE WHAT I HAVE IN MIND.
BUT, CAPTAIN, THAT IS A MESON BEAMER FOR A BATTLEWAGON. A FRIGATE LACKS THE POWER TO EMPLOY IT.

Index

How do I . . . ?

This page contains a simple reference list of common actions players are likely to want to carry out during an adventure. Page numbers of the relevant section are given or an indication of our recommendation of what to use instead. See the main Index for more general information.

Commerce / Travel

Buy equipment (*Purchasing Equipment,* p.58)
Buy a vehicle (*Vehicles*, p.302)
Buy a starship (*Starships,* p.64)
Organisation trading (*Trade*, p.281 & *Trade Mission*, p.291)
Ride a horse / mount / thing (*Animal Handling* & *Riding*, p.142)
Trading (*Merchant*, p.46)
Travel somewhere (*Ticket to Ride*, p.46 & *Transport*, p.80)

Conflict

Ambush someone / something (*Ambush*, p.142)
Blow something up with explosives (*Demolitions*, p.161, *Explosions*, p.239 & *Bombs Outside of Combat*, p.242)
Convince someone (*Deceit*, p.110; *Rapport*, p.129)
Escape from a melee (*Manoeuvre*, p.216 & *Resolving Manoeuvres*, p.223)
Disarm someone (*Disarming*, p.224)
Escape from a space battle (*Evasion & Escape*, p.357)
Fight using a starship (*Conflict Sequence*, p.347)
Fight using a vehicle (*Characters vs. Vehicles*, p.303)
Resolve corporate disagreements (*Organisation Conflict & Manoeuvres*, p.289)
Perform hand to hand combat (armed) (*Guns*, p.121 & *Weapons*, p.143)
Perform hand to hand combat (unarmed) (*Fists*, p.120 & *Kung Fu*, p.164)
Run a social conflict (*Empathy*, p.116 & *Running Conflicts*, p.216)
Use a battle fleet (*Battle Fleets & Brave Armies!*, p.293)
Use an armed force (*Battle Fleets & Brave Armies!* p.293)
Use a personal weapon (*Weapons*, p.143, *Weapons & Guns*, p.231)
Use a gun (*Guns*, p121, *Weapons & Guns*, p.231)
Use a starship weapon (*Ranged Attack*, p.354)
Use a vehicle mounted weapon (use Ranged Attack rules for starships, p.303, 354)
Win an argument (treat as a social conflict: Empathy, p.112 & *Running Conflicts*, p.214)

Drive/Sail/Fly

Drive / sail a boat / ship (treat boats as vehicles, large ships as starships)
Drive a vehicle (*Drive*, p.112)
Fly a plane (*Pilot*, p.129)
Fly a starship (*Starship Pilot*, p.139)

Equipment

Buy equipment (*Purchasing Equipment*, p.58)
Build a gadget (*Making Things*, p.80)
Upgrade / improve something (*Improving Things*, p.81)
Use a gadget (*Personal Things*, p.82)

Game Actions

Tag/Compel an Aspect (*Aspects*, p.22 & *Using Aspects*, p.90)
Use Companions (*Companions*, p.227)
Use a Fate point (*Fate Points*, p.22, 201)
Use Minions (*Minions*, p.173, 226, 542)
Use a Stunt (*Stunts*, p.22,145)
Use a Skill (*Skills*, p.21, 98)

Information Gathering

Check / investigate the immediate environment (*Investigation*, p.123 & 170)
Communicate with / contact someone (*Contacting*, p.109)
Conduct surveillance (use *Casing*, p.107)
Extract information out of someone (*Gather Information*, p.109 & *Intimidation*, p.122)
Hack a computer (*Computers & Hacking*, p.133 & 187)
Infiltrate somewhere (*Infiltration*, p.108 & *Stealth*, p.141)
Interrogate someone (use *Intimidation*, p.122 & 170)
Investigate something (use *Investigation*, p.123 & 170)
Research someone / something (*Academics*, p.100 & 145)
Spy on someone (use *Infiltration*, p.108 & *Stealth*, p.141)
Track or stalk someone / something (use *Alertness*, p.102, *Stealth*, p.141 & *Tracker*, p.197

Medical / Repair

Cure a disease (*Diseases*, p.238)
Remove consequences on characters/ creatures (*Removing Consequences*, p.223)
Remove consequences on / repair equipment (*Fixing Stuff*, p.119)
Remove consequences on / repair a starship (*Repair & Improvement*, p.355-358)
Remove consequences on / repair a vehicle (use repair rules for Starships, p.359-362)
Render medical aid to someone (*Medical Aid*, p.79, *Medical Attention*, p.135, *Doctor*, *Medic* & *Surgeon*, p.187)

Miscellaneous

Charm someone (*Rapport*, p.129 & 180)
Disarm a bomb (*Playing With Fire*, p.241)
Disarm a trap (*Solving Traps*, p.542)
Gamble (*Gambling*, p.120)
Hunt something in the wild (*Tracker*, p.197)
Mine an asteroid (*Mining Equipment*, p.316)
'Read' someone (*Reading People*, p.116)
Run / use an organisation (*Using Organisations*, p.287)
Run / use a starship (*How to do things with Starships,* p.341)
Run / use a vehicle (*Vehicles*, p.302)
Run / use a robot (*Robots*, p.297)
Salvage equipment / starships (*Recycle*, p.191 & Mining*/Salvage*, p.194)
Survive in a hazardous environment (*Environment Suits*, p.67 & *Vacuum & Hazardous Environments*, p.238)
Survive in the wilderness (*Survival*, p.142)
Use a computer (*Computers & Hacking*, p.133 & 187
Use special abilities / powers (*Alien & Mutant Special Abilities*, p249)

Nefarious Activities

Capture a starship (*Boarding Actions*, p.351)
Deceive someone (*Deceit*, p.110)
Forge something (*Forgery*, P.105)
Intimidate / scare someone (*Intimidation*, p.122)
Kidnap someone (achieve *Taken Out* p.221 then escape)
Pick a lock (*Locks*, p.108, & *Cool Hand*, p.189)
Poison someone (*Poisons*, p.118)
Render someone / something unconscious (*Taken Out*, p.221)
Set a trap (*Tricky Traps*, p.540)
Set fire to something (*Fire*, p.239)
Sneak up on someone (*Stealth*, p.141)
Steal items / equipment (*Pickpocket* & *Sleight of Hand*, p.136)

Physical Actions

Break open a door / break something (*Breaking Things*, p.125)
Catch something (*Catch*, p.198)
Climb something (*Climbing*, p.106 & *Simple Actions*, p.213)
Dodge out of the way of something (*Dodging*, p.107)
Falling (*Falling*, p.107)
Hide (*Hiding*, p.142 & *Camouflage*, p.143)
Jump / leap (*Jumping*, p.105)
Lift or carry someone / something (*Lifting Things*, p.126 & *Carrying*, p.225)
Push someone / something (*Pushing*, p.225)
Run / Sprint (*Sprinting*, p.106 & Movement, p.218)
Swim (*Athletics*, p.105)
Throw something at someone (*Weapons*, p.143, *Throw,* p.225)

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SOLIPSIST

by David Donachie

"To them, I said, the truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images."
—Plato, The Republic (Book VII)

There are **people** who think so **strongly** and **individually**, that they can literally **change reality**, teasing out the fabric of the consensus and changing it. They are called **Solipsists**.

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